



Q&A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Page 1 of 36 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 ... Last

thatdarncat

Friday, 30th August, 2002, 04:29 PM

Ongoing Q&A with Gary Gygax - get your questions answered!

We've got Gary Gygax in for an interview on September 4th. If you want to get your questions in early, post them here :)

I'll still be taking questions during the chat, but this will let me start organized.

Thanks!

EDIT - Just got tired of seeing "Gary Gyxax." :)
Henry

Roland Delacroix

Friday, 30th August, 2002, 04:33 PM

"Where do you get your ideas from."

Henry

Friday, 30th August, 2002, 05:05 PM

What are your current d20 projects that we would be ignorant if we didn't pick up; and secondly, what can you tell us about that we should be looking toward in the 4th quarter of 2002 and the 1st quarter of 2003?

mythusmage

Friday, 30th August, 2002, 05:26 PM

It took you *how* long to memorize the Oxford?

Is it true you're allergic to *Strunk's Elements of Style*

:D

thatdarncat

Friday, 30th August, 2002, 07:09 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by mythusmage

It took you how long to memorize the Oxford?

Is it true you're allergic to Strunk's Elements of Style

:D

shush you

though I can be tempted with a bribe to voice you during the chat :p

Maraxle

Friday, 30th August, 2002, 07:09 PM

Would you like my autograph?

Kershek

Friday, 30th August, 2002, 07:52 PM

Do you still game? If so, what system and how often? Are you the DM?

Harlock

Friday, 30th August, 2002, 10:33 PM

Are you related to the Gary character from the movie "Weird Science"?

If you could change one thing about your life, would Dave Arneson be dead?

Who is your favorite game designer? Other than yourself, you egomaniacal old man!

EricNoah

Friday, 30th August, 2002, 11:49 PM

Why?

Mark

Saturday, 31st August, 2002, 12:05 AM

Quote:

Originally posted by EricNoah
[Why?](#)

Oh, you are sooooooooo gonna get it...

Kershek

Saturday, 31st August, 2002, 12:26 AM

I'm going to have nightmares about that photo tonight.

Neo

Saturday, 31st August, 2002, 12:33 AM

Lets see...

Which one of your creations do you yourself consider your greatest work?

Who of the new batch of creative whizz's would you most like to work with?

Is there a product for d20 that someone else did, that you wished you had created yourself?

Can we clone you to ensure future generations fo Gamers get to enjoy your work as much as we have? :D

What one thing would you have done differently in your career looking back now in hindsight?

What advice would you give to aspiring freelancers?

What genre or specific setting that is out there, would you most like to see converted to D20?

What piece of advice would you give to Wizards regarding thier approach to D20 and its marketing as a longterm gamer and creator?

Erm there you go off the top of my noggin.... :D

Harlock

Saturday, 31st August, 2002, 12:51 AM

Another one for Gary:

This is a two part question. Do you have a stalker? Do you want (another) one?

laurencio

Saturday, 31st August, 2002, 01:19 AM

Are there any plans to publish the original Castle Greyhawk?

(I heard rumors about a Hackmaster version, but haven't heard anything in a while)

jester47

Saturday, 31st August, 2002, 02:59 AM

How has the d20 explosion affected your work on Lejendary Adventure?

Do you feel vindicated that the d20 system allows you to publish what is essentially D&D stuff for the D&D game?

Lately you have done a lot of d20 projects, including The Slayer's Guide to Dragons, the revamp of Necropolis, and the Canting Crew. Are these projects good examples of what you have planned or just a precursor to what is next? What d20 thing do you have in the works?

As a player, if you had to choose, would you rather adventure in the Forgotten Realms, or in Greyhawk?

What is you opinion of the Forgotten Realms as a campaign setting?

Aaron.

Nightfall

Saturday, 31st August, 2002, 05:00 AM

If I offer you a blood sacrifice and get 50 copies of Necropolis, will do write for S&SS's Scarred Lands?

Okay maybe not...but serious, Gary, now with R&R2 out and since you wrote the preface for R&R1, do you think that quality of the stuff put out by S&SS has improved a great deal?

William Ronald

Saturday, 31st August, 2002, 05:10 AM

Do you have any plans to work on a new campaign setting, or revisit one that you have worked on in the past.

Who are some of the new designers you would like to work with?

If you could revisit any product you have worked on, what would it be?

What do you think of the gaming industry and the hobby as it stands now as opposed to the early 1970s?

What do you see as the future of our hobby, especially the role of computers and electronic products?

Mark

Saturday, 31st August, 2002, 09:12 AM

The 1st edition AD&D DMG (1979 - TSR Games) is adorned (front and back cover) with a David C Sutherland III rendering of three adventurers battling an efreet on the Elemental Plane of Fire. Was this inspired by one of the games that you ran (or played in) and, if so, what was the outcome of said battle?

JoeGKushner

Saturday, 31st August, 2002, 09:26 AM

Can we see a cease and desist of Lejendary Journeys material in the D20 books? I don't like dual statted books from AEG and Holistic Design, and this is a trend I'd like to see end.

shouit

Saturday, 31st August, 2002, 05:45 PM

If you would have designed d20 what would you have done differently?

[Show 20 post\(s\) from this thread on one page](#)

▼ Page 1 of 36 **1** 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 ... ► Last ►►

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Page 2 of 36 ◀ First ◀ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 ... ▶ Last ▶▶

Golem Joe

Saturday, 31st August, 2002, 07:44 PM

Here are a few:

What do you think are the strengths of d20 and Lejendary Adventure? How would you compare the two?

What material for Lejendary Adventure do you feel would be of most use to d20/DnD players?

What is "Well of Shadows"?

Do you find it difficult to design a cross-over product, like "The Hermit"?

Who were the nine demigods Xagyg imprisoned in Castle Greyhawk?

What's going on with the Lejendary Adventure multiplayer online game?

How would you compare the Lejendary Earth setting to Greyhawk?

Now that Necropolis is out, are there any other "unpublished" Dangerous Journeys material you are looking to have updated to d20?

Tell us about an average night in a Gygaxian gaming session.

Golem Joe

Saturday, 31st August, 2002, 07:49 PM

And one more:

With Troll Lord Games doing dual-stat stuff for Lejendary Adventure and d20, any chance we'll see more companies that you write for doing that in the future?

Talath

Saturday, 31st August, 2002, 11:12 PM

Do you like eggrolls? :D

It is a legitimate question :D

Zarthon

Sunday, 1st September, 2002, 02:42 PM

I wish I could sit in on this chat, but I have an important test on Wednesday and the fact that the chat is usally about 3-4 am for me. I will just have to wait for the log:(

Here is my questions for Gary: How many dragons have you killed in alll your years of gaming?

Harlock

Sunday, 1st September, 2002, 03:15 PM

Mr. Gygax, do you have the personality to cast real spells yet?

sword-dancer

Sunday, 1st September, 2002, 09:54 PM

Mr Gygax

When You compare Dangerous Journeys, Lejendary Adventures and D&D/D20 what are the strength and weaknesses from every setting?

Which non english RPGs do you know and how did you value them and why?

DDK

Monday, 2nd September, 2002, 01:43 AM

If you could have Greyhawk back under your control and therefore could, and did, publish a decisive GH book, what would you change to bring it back to your "vision"?

Minor spoiler for RttToEE

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. .

What do you think of Monte's treatment of the Elder Elemental Eye and Tharizdun in Return to the Temple of Elemental Evil?

Henry

Monday, 2nd September, 2002, 02:58 AM

Quote:

Originally posted by JoeGKushner

Can we see a cease and desist of Legendary Journeys material in the D20 books?

I would sooo love to see Gary answer this one diplomatically. What you ask is tantamount to "Would you please stop selling your system in the products you write?"

BTW, it's Lejendary Adventures.

Turlogh

Monday, 2nd September, 2002, 08:42 AM

Would you rather play a character or Dm ?

Have you ever suffered DM burnout?

Will we ever see Mordenkainen's true levels and abilities?

Upper_Krust

Monday, 2nd September, 2002, 11:24 AM

Question for Gary

Have you anymore news on the graphic novel representations of the Gord the Rogue novels?

gordonknox

Monday, 2nd September, 2002, 02:57 PM

Necromancer Games

How would you characterize your relationship with Necromancer Games?

Are there plans for future collaborations with those folks?

gk

PA

Monday, 2nd September, 2002, 10:20 PM

Why?

Quote:

Originally posted by Kershek

I'm going to have nightmares about that photo tonight.

And so will I. This Eric Noah guy has no sense of decency.

PA

Monday, 2nd September, 2002, 10:21 PM

...

Quote:

Originally posted by Nightfall

If I offer you a blood sacrifice and get 50 copies of Necropolis, will do write for S&SS's Scarred Lands?

I'm sure it would depend on WHOSE blood it is. But let's not advertize the fact...

Dark Psion

Monday, 2nd September, 2002, 10:23 PM

Can you explain the addition of Psionics in the AD&D Players Handbook (1st edition)?

It seemed added on and thrown together.

Deedlit

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 01:45 AM

Who is the parent who Hextor and Heironeous share.

MerricB

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 04:00 AM

What do you think will be the future of RPGs in general, and d20 in particular?

What do you think about Dave Arneson's re-entry into RPG publishing, especially the "For too long the game industry has been mired in mediocrity, Blackmoor will burn a new path in creativity and ingenuity as it did when it served as the origin of role playing games" quotation?

Cheers!

sword-dancer

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 12:46 PM

Mr Gygax

What inspired you to create roleplaying?

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 02:10 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Roland Delacroix
"Where do you get your ideas from."

This is an easy one, so don't pist it when I chat:

Jack Chick.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 02:29 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Henry
What are your current d20 projects that we would be ignorant if we didn't pick up; and secondly, what can you tell us about that we should be looking toward in the 4th quarter of 2002 and the 1st quarter of 2003?

You likely have seen NECROPOLIS from Necromancer. I am considering doing a sequel to it--if I can find some maps and notes. That's something that will be decided late this year or early next.

Mongoose has released SLATER'S GUIDE TO DRAGONS, Jon Creffield and I have also turned in SLAYER'S GUIDE TO UNDEAD. I am considering the possibilities for another project sometime in 2003.

Troll Lord Games released my module, THE HERMIT, at GenCon. Before that they did the CANTING CREW. A super module, THE HALL OF MANY PANES, is slated for turnover to them sometime in the early fall, with Jon Creffield doing the D20 work. I don't think the HALL' is like any other module ever done, and I am most interested in hearing the feedback when it hist late this year or early next. Of course, CANTING CREW is the first of a series of reference books for world building. Coming soon is the WORLD BUILDER, a "descriptionary." I'll be turning over the ms. for the next one that deals with social classes, everyday life, etc. soon. After than at least thtree more are planned to complete the "Gygaxian" Fantasy World series. Check the TLG website :eek:

Chris Clark and I are working (still) on CASTLE WOLDMOON, whicjh will be D20 with LA game stats also. It is very much an "old school" adventure module--a mix of thinking, exploration, problem solving with much combat in between those elements. The work has turned out to be so extensive that how to publish it is the main question--three installments or maybe four. I don't know for sure when this is going to get into print, late this year or next.

Although not D20, I am considering a project with Kenzer for HACKMASTER. I have an idea or two I'm mulling over. If I decide to go forward with this effort, it will commence in the winter.

I think that's it. I don't want to take on a lot of new projects, as I expect that in 2003 I'll be spending a fair amount of time working with the online developers as the LEJENDARY ADVENTURE MMPORPG gets into alpha and then closed beta test.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 02:32 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by mythusmage
It took you how long to memorize the Oxford?

Is it true you're allergic to Strunk's Elements of Style

:D

I'm still working on the Webster's Unexpurgated, Alan.

It is true, as I prefer to have my own style as opposed to that promulgated by someone who can't do so trys to tell other's how they should write :rolleyes:

Gary

Q&A with Gary Gygax - Part I

Printable View

Show 20 post(s) from this thread on one page

Page 3 of 36 ◀ First ◀ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 ... ▶ Last ▶▶

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 02:33 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Maraxle***Would you like my autograph?**

Depends on how large the sum of money on the check is, and if it is good.

:D

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 02:37 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Kershek***Do you still game? If so, what system and how often? Are you the DM?**

Yes, I run a weekly campaign of the LEJENDARY ADVENTURE system here, and I am the "Lejend Master" ;)

Of course now and then I do DM some OD&D or AD&D too. When Fast Forward publishes the supplement for bringing mutant humans into the METAMORPHOSIS ALPHA game. I intend to get one of the players in our group to GM a campaign of that game so I can play a character at least once a month--I miss playing!

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 02:41 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Harlock***Are you related to the Gary character from the movie "Weird Science"?****If you could change one thing about your life, would Dave Arneson be dead?****Who is your favorite game designer? Other than yourself, you egomaniacal old man!**

First, I suspect that character was likely based off of someone more like you.

Second, what a rude fellow you are. Of course I wish no ill whatsoever to Dave! As an aside, I don't waste time recriminating, let alone considering the immutable past.

Third, as you don't know me in the least, your characterization is pathetic. More importantly, as you fail to indicate what sort of game, I can not possibly attempt an answer,

Gary

sword-dancer

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 03:03 PM

A question from Midgard forum

Quote:

"Do you know Midgard? If yes, what are you thinking about it?"

Midgard is the oldest german fantasy rpg

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 03:05 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Neo***Lets see...**

Which one of your creations do you yourself consider your greatest work?

Who of the new batch of creative whizz's would you most like to work with?

Is there a product for d20 that someone else did, that you wished you had created yourself?

Can we clone you to ensure future generations fo Gamers get to enjoy your work as much as we have? :D

What one thing would you have done differently in your career looking back now in hindsight?

What advice would you give to aspiring freelancers?

What genre or specific setting that is out there, would you most like to see converted to D20?

What piece of advice would you give to Wizards regarding thier approach to D20 and its marketing as a longterm gamer and creator?

Erm there you go off the top of my noggin.... :D

Okay, and that's quite a laundry list :eek:

As with children, picking favorites is not my style. I can say that I had a lot of fun writing all the RPGs that I've done, and that the modules are a lot of work but they too were enjoyable. In all, I have a number of historical games that I really like a lot and would love to see published and played. Think of it this way: I am a hardcore gamer, and I like to create and play games. The project I am working on or the game I am playing at the moment is the "current" favorite.

As for working with co-writers, and I have worked with quite a few, familiarity is a key factor. That said, I find that working with Jon Creffield of late is indeed very much a pleasure.

It is not possible for me to produce as much as I do and spend a lot of time reviewing other author's work, so I can't comment. Fact is I don't get the time I wish I could to read fiction. Not all work and no play, but close...

As for cloning, heh! I'd do that now to get to more of the ideas I have were it possible. What I hope will happen, though, is that some of the gamers who have read and played my material, or who have worked with me in creating such work, will come to the fore in due course with their own excellent work, some of which will possibly reflect some of my style.

As noted, I don't spend time or energy tinkering about the past, what could have been changed. However, I try not to make the same mistakes over and over...

Aspring freelancers: Work for love, not money. If you enjoy the effort, love gaming, then that will come through in your writing. To break into the field, figure on a lot of material being published on a gratis basis, and be sure you produce plenty to as you become known. Writing modules for convention tournament play is a great way of building a "name," of course.

No comment on D20 conversions, sorry.

As for advice to WotC. I don't think they need any in regards the D20 system. However, in regards to the new D&D one, I believe that there is a question of "legs" for many new players, because as things stand the game allows too rapid level increase. There's more, but if Hasbro wants consulting, they'll contract for it:)

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 03:11 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by laurencio

Are there any plans to publish the original Castle Greyhawk?

(I heard rumors about a Hackmaster version, but haven't heard anything in a while)

Publishing a revised version of the original castle ruins and dungeons from my campaign begin in 1972 has been considered, yes. Frankly, the project is so large, would consume so much time, that I can not consider it alone. So far I have had no success in reaching agreement with another person in regards to co-development of the material. Of course I require someone who actually played extensively in the campaign and knows how to design adventure modules.

That said, I am not giving up. I thought perhaps to do something modest based on the old work, and if that proves to be successful, moving ahead on the development of additional material, much as the original dungeons were created.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 03:20 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by jester47

How has the d20 explosion affected your work on Lejendary Adventure?

Do you feel vindicated that the d20 system allows you to publish what is essentially D&D stuff for the D&D game?

Lately you have done a lot of d20 projects, including The Slayer's Guide to Dragons, the revamp of Necropolis, and the Canting Crew. Are these projects good examples of what you have planned or just a precursor to what is next? What d20 thing do you have in the

works?

As a player, if you had to choose, would you rather adventure in the Forgotten Realms, or in Greyhawk?

What is your opinion of the Forgotten Realms as a campaign setting?

Aaron.

Okay, and I'll try to answer all of the above in abridged fashion. First, from my standpoint, writing for 3E is very constraining, and it can not compare to creating material for AD&D--much less rules-heavy a system. I try to make all adventure material I write at least somewhat different from former work--unless the modules are connected, of course. You'll have to be the judge of how well I've done as new adventures appear in print.

Note that the reference series being done by TLG is really very much generic in its aim, and that material for D20, and the LA game system, is appended for the benefit of those who want such details to facilitate the incorporation of the generic ideas into their campaign rules systems.

Now as for a campaign setting, of course I prefer the WoG to FR, as I wrote so much of the former, am intimately familiar with the original work. I hasten to add that there are many buffs that are now better informed than I am in regards to the world setting. Having performed left it for going on two decades, one tends to forget as new material is created.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 03:28 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Nightfall

If I offer you a blood sacrifice and get 50 copies of Necropolis, will you write for S&SS's Scarred Lands?

Okay maybe not...but serious, Gary, now with R&R2 out and since you wrote the preface for R&R1, do you think that quality of the stuff put out by S&SS has improved a great deal?

Heh, and all I can say to the first is, liquor is more efficacious than blood...

Seriously, I have not had the chance to review R&R 2--I do have a heavy work schedule, and reading others' work doesn't get the words on "paper" (into the computer file), so I miss a lot when fully engaged in creative work. Fact is that I have not yet had time to do more than skim through the NECROPOLIS adventure. The team at Necromancer has done a great job in the conversion, adding material that really fits in so smoothly that it's hard to tell where they did that. I'm really delighted with their efforts in this regard, so I can only assume they've done a bang-up job with R&R 2 now. Eventually I'll get to read the material. Of course. I think there's an opening late in February for that... :rolleyes:

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 03:41 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by William Ronald

Do you have any plans to work on a new campaign setting, or revisit one that you have worked on in the past.

Who are some of the new designers you would like to work with?

If you could revisit any product you have worked on, what would it be?

What do you think of the gaming industry and the hobby as it stands now as opposed to the early 1970s?

What do you see as the future of our hobby, especially the role of computers and electronic products?

Whoa! Another longish list.

As to new designers, that's a question I can't answer, for as I've noted above, I seldom have the opportunity to read, let alone play, other authors' material. (That's why I am eager to "retire" so I can spend 40 or more hours a week playing games rather than writing them.)

If I could revisit something, two adventures spring to mind immediately--the city of Erelheicindlu in THE VAULT OF THE DROW and the Elder Elemental God and what might lie below the ToEE.

There can be no comparison to the hobby gaming field of the early 1970s and today's, the difference being vast! As I have often said, and in opposition to not a few in the business, I do believe that gamers are both above average in intelligence and highly creative. My main proof of the latter position is the size and diversity of gaming now as compared to anytime in the late 1970s or even early 1980s.

Paper games will persist, and the market might even grow some, but the clear future for growth and diversity is in the electronic end of gaming. That's something I've said for quite a few years now.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 03:45 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Mark

The 1st edition AD&D DMG (1979 - TSR Games) is adorned (front and back cover) with a David C Sutherland III rendering of three adventurers battling an efreet on the Elemental Plane of Fire. Was this inspired by one of the games that you ran (or played in) and, if so, what was the outcome of said battle?

Actually, I did run a few adventures in the City of Brass, but I don't recall Dave Sutherland being involved--mainly rob and Terry Kuntz. So, to answer the question, I suppose that Dave either based his illustration on his own adventuring or else pure imagination ;)

Cheerio,
Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 03:49 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by JoeGKushner

Can we see a cease and desist of Lejandary Journeys material in the D20 books? I don't like dual statted books from AEG and Holistic Design, and this is a trend I'd like to see end.

Got a mouse in your pocket, joe? :eek:

As far as I am concerned, I much prefer creating in the LA game system than doing so in the D20 one. So the short answer is that I have another super-adventure done, THE HALL OF MANY PANES, and that will be dual system, as will CASTLE WOLFMOON. After that, though, I don't plan on writing any more dual-system material so you'll not have to suffer beyond what is noted. Well, allow me to step back and add that the "Gygaxian" fantasy world reference books while mainly generic in content, will likely continue to include both D20 and LA game system material ;)

Gary

Scott814thmpco

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 03:50 PM

Lejandary d20?

Hi Mr. Gygax

Perhaps if you converted LA to d20, your work load might lessen and I would have another campaign setting to tack on to my World of Greyhawk setting, which is a combo of Call of Cthulhu, Star Wars and D&D. ;)

I would also love to see you do a WoG campaign source book like WoTC did for the Forgotten Realms as well as a revised queen of spiders module.

Scott Holst

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 03:53 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by shout

If you would have designed d20 what would you have done differently?

This is likely the same answer you'd get from any pro designer: Nothing, except what comes after the name and before the part that concludes the work.

Seriously, the designers who did the material don't want to hear what I'd have done differently, and I don't have any interest in detailing my particular design ideas for a third edition system, eh?

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 04:19 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Golem Joe

Here are a few:

What do you think are the strengths of d20 and Lejandary Adventure? How would you compare the two?

What material for Lejandary Adventure do you feel would be of most use to d20/DnD players?

What is "Well of Shadows"?

Do you find it difficult to design a cross-over product, like "The Hermit"?

Who were the nine demigods Xagyg imprisoned in Castle Greyhawk?

What's going on with the Lejandary Adventure multiplayer online game?

How would you compare the Lejandary Earth setting to Greyhawk?

Now that Necropolis is out, are there any other "unpublished" Dangerous Journeys material you are looking to have updated to d20?

Tell us about an average night in a Gygaxian gaming session.

Whew!

Such a lot you EN boarders are! So many questions, so little time to answer them :D

The D20 system is so different from the LA game that it's like comparing apples and oranges. Rules-heavy/rules-light, class-based/skill-bundle-based. About all I can say is that one is a great change of pace from the other. Well, that and if you are writing material for one or the other, it's a lot easier to do for the LA system ;)

Again, there isn't much correlation between D20 and LA systems, so much of the base material doesn't easily cross over. However, there are a number of magic items, spells, and monsters that can translate to D20 and will likely be fun to add to the game.

The WELL OF SHADOWS is a very difficult adventure module that Jon Greffield and I co-wrote a couple of years back. It is connected to an LA game sourcebook, THE MALEDICTED PLATEAU. When the latter is published, The WELL OF SHADOWS will follow it into print--likely in late 2003. Many an a player will rue the day they sent their avatar into that deadly place... :D

The difficulty with doing a dual-system product is more in the system details than in the conceptualization, especially with a module. After all, a good adventure translates into most every system with the correct mechanics. So it is the correct mechanics that are a pain, not the ideas. As the D20 system is very detailed, the pain is great ;) Fortunately, I have good comrades to help assure that not too many errors crop up, so that the pain won't also be felt by the gamers who pick up the product.

"Who were the nine demigods Xagyg imprisoned in Castle Greyhawk?" --Ask this over on the GreyTalk list:)

We have a deal signed with Dreams-Interactive for an LA MMPORPG. The demo is being added to now, and we hope to have an alpha test ready around the middle of next year. That given, then a closed beta at year's end, open beta in 2004, and then the game up and running online late in that year.

The Legendary Earth world setting is a complete planet based on a very loose parallel to the actual world. So it is again a matter of apples and oranges in regards comparing it to the WoG. About the only parallel that can be drawn between the two is that both are designed to facilitate GM creativity, encourage input, and allow for campaigns to be vastly different even though based on the same setting.

"Now that Necropolis is out, are there any other "unpublished" Dangerous Journeys material you are looking to have updated to d20?"--None that spring to mind, no. Loren Wiseman's CITY OF ASCALON would be a good D20 product, though, I should think. It was never published as a DJ/MYTHUS one, so Loren has the material. And it's his call.

"Tell us about an average night in a Gygaxian gaming session."

Well, heh! No time for another page of material here. Get on my "games list," and you'll get an email from me just about every week that recounts the action in the campaign session run Thursday night. The team of doughty adventurers are now working their way through the HALL OF MANY PANES--said module to be published late this year or early next by Troll Lord.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 04:24 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Golem Joe
And one more:

With Troll Lord Games doing dual-stat stuff for Legendary Adventure and d20, any chance we'll see more companies that you write for doing that in the future?

Good question! Aside from the massive CASTLE WOLFMOON adventure that Chris Clark and I have about finished, I haven't any plans on doing more dual-system material. However, if some publisher is interested, maybe so.

Fact is that it is very demanding work, module writing. I approach it with trepidation, and executing the project is very time consuming. So to make the task lighter and maximize personal enjoyment I far prefer writing using the LA game as a base--I find it facilitates my creativity. If I can work thus, it's more likely that I'll be motivated to write ;)

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 04:27 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Talath
Do you like eggrolls? :D

It is a legitimate question :D

They're okay, but I prefer Vietnamese "rollups" with mint in 'em:)

It is a legitimate question as I don't think that this is restricted to RPG material...

eeek: Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 04:32 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Zarthon

I wish I could sit in on this chat, but I have an important test on Wednesday and the fact that the chat is usually about 3-4 am for me. I will just have to wait for the log:(

Here is my questions for Gary: How many dragons have you killed in alll your years of gaming?

To the best of my recollection my PCs have managed to slay only a few. Of course Mordenkainen and party did subdue a couple of red dragons. The last time Mordie was involved in dragon slaying was in an OAD&D campaign run by my son Ernie. Two ancient white dragons had ambushed his main players' PC party, killed most. So they sought help, Mordenkainen agreed to the deal, and lead the survivors and some new PCs into the dragons' lair. a Power Word Stun took care of one, and the other, lurking invisibly above on a ledge was then assailed and laid low--many a Magic Missile lightening the combat load on the other characters in the melee.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 04:36 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Harlock

Mr. Gygax, do you have the personality to cast real spells yet?

"I've got that magic touch, it makes you thrill so much.
"It casts a spell, it rings a bell, that magic touch."

Real spells? You mean like dizzy spells, coughing spells, fainting spells? Dry spells? Wet spells? Heat spells? Cold spells? As far as I know, that's about the extent of reality in regards spells.

If there were actually magic spells, and I could use same, do you suppose I'd be answering these kinds of questions?

Heh,
Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 04:43 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by sword-dancer

Mr Gygax

When You compare Dangerous Journeys, Lejendary Adventures and D&D/D20 what are the strength and weaknesses from every setting?

Which non english RPGs do you know and how did you value them and why?

Good questions, but I have no time to manage critical analyses of this sort. Besides, everybody and their pet monkey too does this sort of exercise all the time on one website or another :)

Briefly: DJ is a rather rules-heavy skill based system with great detail required for the creation of the heroic persona.

LA is a rules-light, skil-bundle-based system that facilitiates creativity and innovation within the rules framework.

As for my opinion of non-English RPGs, I understand that there are some excellent ones. However, not reading in other languages, not having time or the chance to play them--or most other English-language RPGs for that matter--I can not offer any useful comment here Sorry.

Gary

3E is a rules-heavy system that provides full structuire for everything.

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 04:46 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Fourecks

If you could have Greyhawk back under your control and therefore could, and did, publish a decisive GH book, what would you change to bring it back to your "vision"?

Well, with all the creative ideas I need to come up with for projects I can do, I simply don't have time or energy to speculate in regards material that is quite unlikely to ever eventuate.

When WotC approaches me with such an assignment I'll think about it :eek:

Gary

All times are GMT +1. The time now is 03:12 PM

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Q&A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Page 4 of 36 ◀◀ First ◀ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 ... ▶ Last ▶▶

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 04:51 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Henry

I would sooo love to see Gary answer this one diplomatically. What you ask is tantamount to "Would you please stop selling your system in the products you write?"

BTW, it's Legendary Adventure.

Heh, and how did I do?

Of course it is a hell of a lot more than pushing the LA game system, amigo. The actual creative effort involved is vastly easier for me when I am thinking in and using the LA system ;)

Gary

ColonelHardisson

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 04:54 PM

If you dislike d20, or find it too constraining to write for, why not simply write whatever you'd like, and let someone else figure out how it works in d20? Sort of like how the Necropolis d20 conversion was done, but with new material.

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 04:56 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Turlogh

Would you rather play a character or Dm ?

Have you ever suffered DM burnout?

Will we ever see Mordenkainen's true levels and abilities?

As I am usually stuck being the GM, I long to play a character--or avatar. If I could manage both, I'd spend about half the time with each activity.

Yes, I have suffered from GM burnout. That's why it's great to play a character now and then as it refreshes and gives the opposite perspective in regards to adventuring.

Actually, I am given to understand that the EPIC 3E book has come pretty close to nailing Mordie's level. I haven't seen it, so I can't comment further. As I do still play that PC now and again, I won't reveal anything else.

Gary

ColonelHardisson

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 04:57 PM

Oh yeah - so now what are you gonna talk about in the chat? You've answered everything!

Seriously, though - what would you like to discuss in the chat?

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 05:00 PM

Re: Question for Gary

Quote:

Originally posted by Upper_Krust

Have you anymore news on the graphic novel representations of the GORD the ROGUE novels?

Shhhh!

I'm not supposed to be talking about this until the publisher makes an official news release...

The work is going forward, but art delays have caused a delay in making a public announcement of the release of the series. It had been planned to announce around this time, but I suspect there will be nothing "official" until near the end of the year.

I can say that all the work I have seen so far is really excellent, some even "breathtaking," and that I am champing at the bit for the release!

Ciuaio,
Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 05:03 PM

Re: Necromancer Games

Quote:

Originally posted by gordonknox

How would you characterize your relationship with Necromancer Games?

Are there plans for future collaborations with those folks?

gk

I think the crew at Necromancer are splendid fellows, and I really enjoy working with them--or just hanging out:D They did a great job with NECROPOLIS too, so in regards to their creative work I can only give lauds. I am considering a sequel to NECROPOLIS, but that depends on me finding some maps and notes--that might be lost. It will be some months time before I know.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 05:07 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Dark Psion

Can you explain the addition of Psionics in the AD&D Players Handbook (1st edition)?

It seemed added on and thrown together.

How right you are!

When I was writing the AD&D core material, some of my fellows in the Chicagoland area put considerable pressure on me to include psionics in the system. Sadly, I caved in to please them. If I had not been so deeply immersed in the whole, trying to get it finished on schedule, I'd have doon a far better job with the psychic-power area, I believe. It would have been far better if I'd waited and done the material when concentrating solely on that aspect of play.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 05:09 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Deedlit

Who is the parent who Hextor and Heironeous share.

I can't say, because the matter is now for WotC to decide, eh?

What's your guess as to this?

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 05:13 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by MerricB

What do you think will be the future of RPGs in general, and d20 in particular?

What do you think about Dave Arneson's re-entry into RPG publishing, especially the "For too long the game industry has been mired in mediocrity, Blackmoor will burn a new path in creativity and ingenuity as it did when it served as the origin of role playing games" quotation?

Cheers!

RPGs have a bright future, both inb paper and especially electronically, the mnore so as AI improves, and most home computers are equipped with audio and video capacities.

As for Dave Arneson's re-entry, I wish him the best of luck, The hype involved in this is not to be confused with actual conditions, of course. Most new products have more than a touch of puffery in their promotion, no?

:D
Gary

Upper_Krust

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 05:16 PM

Re: Re: Question for Gary

Hi Gary! :)

Quote:

Originally posted by Col_Pladoh
Shhhh!

I'm not supposed to be talking about this until the publisher makes an official news release...

The work is going forward, but art delays have caused a delay in making a public announcement of the release of the series. It had been planned to announce around this time, but I suspect there will be nothing "official" until near the end of the year.

Okay, mums the word. ;)

Quote:

Originally posted by Col_Pladoh
i can say that all the work I have seen so far is really excellent, some even "breathtaking," and that I am champing at the bit for the release!

Now your just teasing! :D

One last thing; if you get the opportunity try and slip the 8th installment in there. ;)

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 05:18 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by sword-dancer
Mr Gygax

What inspired you to create roleplaying?

Short answers only to questions demanding at least essay length responses ;)

Some 30 years of living prior to actually sitting down and writing the first draft (50 pages in length) all combined to bring about the resulting game. It was a combination of much reading of imaginative fiction, a love of games, and the desire to create that enables it.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 05:20 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by sword-dancer
A question from Midgard forum

Midgard is the oldest german fantasy rpg

Sadly, ni, I am not familiar with MIDGARD, save in regards to the Norse mythology version.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 05:22 PM

Re: Lejandary d20?

Quote:

Originally posted by Scott814thmpco
Hi Mr. Gygax

Perhaps if you converted LA to d20, your work load might lessen and I would have another campaign setting to tack on to my World of Greyhawk setting, which is a combo of Call of Cthulhu, Star Wars and D&D. ;)
I would also love to see you do a WoG campaign source book like WoTC did for the Forgotten Realms as well as a revised queen of spiders module.

Scott Holst

That'll never happen, I assure you. I very much prefer a rules-light, skill-bundle-based system for my creative work, and changing the LA system from that to something quite different would be absolutely counter-productive to my creative muse, shall we say...

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 05:30 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by ColonelHardisson

If you dislike d20, or find it too constraining to write for, why not simply write whatever you'd like, and let someone else figure out how it works in d20? Sort of like how the Necropolis d20 conversion was done, but with new material.

First, I don't dislike playing D20, I just don't like DMing the system....or writing for it because of all the rules and "fiddley bits" involved. As an aside, the authors did a hell of a job making the system tight and virtually immutable.

So, my fellow colonel, you have hit the nail squarely on the head. I do write in the LA system, then have an associate work up the conversuon material, and we then go over the whole of it.

Actually, if I do any HACKMASTER design I plan to use AD&D and the working base and then have someone else check the work and convert to HM. Of course, I'll likely toss in some new material designed strictly for Gary Jackson's masterpiece.

:eek:

Gary

Maraxle

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 05:36 PM

Your Lejendary Adventures system sounds interesting. Does it support the Open Gaming License, or something similar, for 3rd party creations? Is there an equivalent of the D20 license available, or in the works?

I apologize if this is considered "common knowledge", as it is not common to me. :)

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 05:50 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by ColonelHardisson

Oh yeah - so now what are you gonna talk about in the chat? You've answered everything!

Seriously, though - what would you like to discuss in the chat?

Right on, homes! As I am only going to be on for an hour, I thought I could manage a lot more this way that when I actually got online. I am nor a fast typist, so my answers take too much time when in live chat.

As for what I'd like to discuss, well... I figure it's up to the assembled gamers to decide that. I can go with the flow:)

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 05:54 PM

Re: Re: Re: Question for Gary

Quote:

Originally posted by Upper_Krust

Hi Gary! :)

One last thing; if you get the opportunity try and slip the 8th installment in there. :)

Actually, the plan is to do the first two novels, with some of the material from CITY OF HAWKS included, and see how things go. If, as we are pretty certain will be the case, the work is well received, then the publisher will go on to cover the other three main books. As side ventures we'll cover the short stories, and some new material too, all things working out as projected. In effect ther will be like an eighth book.

Cheers,
Gary

Mortaneus

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 06:51 PM

Two questions:

1. Regarding Necropolis, what is the possibility that we might see a World of Darkness conversion for it? Personally, it seems like it would fit quite well into the setting, especially with White Wolf's current emphasis on the middle east. An ancient evil buried beneath the sands?

2. Have you ever considered writing an autobiography?

Sir Edgar

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 08:33 PM

Four facts:

1. The children of D&D 1st edition (AD&D) have now grown up and started publishing their own products largely inspired by the work you and others did during the 70's and 80's.

2. D&D 2nd edition and everything associated with it is pretty much history.

3. The current owner of D&D, Wizards of the Coast, has released the Open Gaming License and d20 trademark allowing companies to produce

D&D-related material like never before.

4. People like yourself, Dave Arneson, and Rob Kuntz have becoming more active in the D&D 3rd edition gaming community lately.

Four questions:

1. To what degree, in your opinion, has D&D returned to its original roots (style and spirit-wise)?
2. What are your feelings on the D&D products that have been produced over the past 15 years or so (esp. Forgotten Realms)?
3. Who are your favorite D&D artists (then and now) and why?
4. How does it feel to be back producing D&D-related material?! :D

Henry

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 09:50 PM

:p :D :p

The Wednesday Chat started early, I see!

edit - I think you answered quite well, Gary. :) I pretty much knew what the answer would be, but I didn't want to "speak for you."

LA, by the way, is a very good system, and I recommend it to anyone who enjoys a more rules-lite environment, but with low-fantasy capability as well. This means you, Kaptain Kantrip! :)

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 09:50 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Mortaneus

Two questions:

1. Regarding Necropolis, what is the possibility that we might see a World of Darkness conversion for it? Personally, it seems like it would fit quite well into the setting, especially with White Wolf's current emphasis on the middle east. An ancient evil buried beneath the sands?

2. Have you ever considered writing an autobiography?

1. That's a question to ask Necromancer. I'll venture here, though, that it's a negative, as I suspect they licensed the material from WotC for D20 conversion only.

2. Actually, I have been asked this often, and for years. That has caused me to do some preliminary work in recalling my early childhood in Chicago, and a bit of it later on, from age eight, in Lake Geneva. However, as I have a pretty good memory, and not a lot of spare time to write, the material is fairly detailed but spotty in coverage of the years. That is, mainly outstanding episodes in my childhood memory are covered without comments on much of how I got into playing games at age five, how WWII impacted me, all that sort of thing. So, to sum up, yes, and I have a few dozen pages done, but it's not really an autobiography yet, just a lot of recorded incidents and the like.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 10:03 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Sir Edgar

Four questions:

1. To what degree, in your opinion, has D&D returned to its original roots (style and spirit-wise)?

2. What are your feelings on the D&D products that have been produced over the past 15 years or so (esp. Forgotten Realms)?

3. Who are your favorite D&D artists (then and now) and why?

4. How does it feel to be back producing D&D-related material?!! :D

Okay, and here goes:

1. There is no relationship between 3E and original D&D, or OAD&D for that matter. Different games, style, and spirit.

2. Actually, as I've been pretty busy creating other gaming material during the past 15 years, I haven't the depth of experience to give a reasonable commentary on such products.

3. Off the top of my head, and in no particular order, my favorite artists are Trampier, Elmore, Parkinson, and Easley. Hmmm... I think I am forgetting someone here, but such is life. As for why, well, that's like asking why I like quail with artichoke sauce--a matter of taste:)

4. It is certainly fun to produce material for the D&D gaming audience again. because of course that's where I come from.

Gary

Sir Edgar

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 10:11 PM

Can you talk more about the style and spirit of D&D and AD&D during the 70's and 80's, especially during conventions and such? What were your favorite moments and what did you enjoy most about the atmosphere then? How was playing and creating for D&D different from how it is now?

Maraxle

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 10:17 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Maraxle

Your Legendary Adventures system sounds interesting. Does it support the Open Gaming License, or something similar, for 3rd party creations? Is there an equivalent of the D20 license available, or in the works?

I apologize if this is considered "common knowledge", as it is not common to me. ;)

Just in case you missed it...

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 10:29 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Sir Edgar

Can you talk more about the style and spirit of D&D and AD&D during the 70's and 80's, especially during conventions and such? What were your favorite moments and what did you enjoy most about the atmosphere then? How was playing and creating for D&D different from how it is now?

I could spend a good bit of time doing that, speaking to the difference in style and spirit, but that's a pale exercise. The only way one can really grasp the difference is to play each game.

The main differences in the older works I did and 3E are style of writing, reliance on archetypes, limitations on character advancement, availability of and creation of magic items, and general single-class play for human characters.

Play is mainly reliant on rules. I ignored those I write when DMing if the game called for that, and in all added what was logical in terms of the game environment to play. Thus much of adventuring was not "by the book," but rather seat of the pants play by DM and players alike.

Rules lawyers are unmentionable...

Creating adventures is something that generally relies a lot on the system bases, rules, monsters, environments, etc. In regards to the first named, the more rules one must pay close attention to, the more difficult it is to create adventure material.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 10:38 PM

Maraxle Wrote:

Your Legendary Adventures system sounds interesting. Does it support the Open Gaming License, or something similar, for 3rd party creations? Is there an equivalent of the D20 license available, or in the works?

I apologize if this is considered "common knowledge", as it is not common to me.

Just in case you missed it...

Thanks!

Indeed I somehow missed your post.

The LA game material is not covered under any form of open license. However, with TLG we are working on a permission form and agreement so as to allow the use material found in the "Gygaxian" Fantasy World series of reference books, the CANTING CREW and subsequent volumes. After all, that's why the works were conveyed and written in the first place, to assist other authors and designers in creating material of their own :D

I'll have to query Troll Lord in regard to getting the permission statement done in proper legal fashion..right after I post this, in fact!

Cheers,
Gary

Harlock

Tuesday, 3rd September, 2002, 11:40 PM

Originally posted by Harlock

Are you related to the Gary character from the movie "Weird Science"?

If you could change one thing about your life, would Dave Arneson be dead?

Who is your favorite game designer? Other than yourself, you egomaniacal old man!

Quote:

Originally posted by Col_Pladoh

First, I suspect thy character was likely based off of someone more like you.

Second, what a rude fellow you are. Of course I wish no ill whatsoever to Dave! As an aside, I don't waste time recriminating, let alone considering the immutable past.

Third, as you don't know me in the least, your characterization is pathetic. More importantly, as you fail to indicate what sort of game, I can not possibly attempt an answer,

Gary

Oh come now, Mr. Gygax. It was all in good fun. I could make some mean spirited retorts but obviously this would start a flame war extraordinaire. If you're touchy, it's understandable. I'm a bit mischievous. And for the record, Gary was actually a funny character and a geek and I proudly wear both of those badges.

If you want serious questions: What kinds of things can we expect from you in the future (RPG wise so there is no confusion)?

Are there any D20 games other than fantasy types that have caught your eye, say superheros, modern/future, wargames?

Are there any up and coming RPG writers that have caught your eye that we should watch out for?

I'll leave it at that for now.

Col_Pladoh

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 12:12 AM

Quote:

Originally posted by Harlock

Oh come now, Mr. Gygax. It was all in good fun. I could make some mean spirited retorts but obviously this would start a flame war extraordinaire. If you're touchy, it's understandable. I'm a bit mischievous. And for the record, Gary was actually a funny character and a geek and I proudly wear both of those badges.

Hey! You poosted the in a manner that called for a reply such as I gave you. so don't admonish me for your initial attitude, eh? :eek:

Quote:

If you want serious questions: What kinds of things can we expect from you in the future (RPG wise so there is no confusion)?

Are there any D20 games other than fantasy types that have caught your eye, say superheros, modern/future, wargames?

Are there any up and coming RPG writers that have caught your eye that we should watch out for?

I'll leave it at that for now.

Sure, and I am happy to answer your queries, Harlock, and in the same spirit as they are asked. so it's all comradely now ;)

The projects I am considering have ben named in my various responses above. there are certainly two modules coming--CASTLE WOLFMOON and HALL OF MANY PANES. Not mentioned previously are a number of works for the LA game system that will be releasing this year and on through 2003--maybe into 2004--an adventure and sourcebooks for the 20 pantheons of deities in the LEJENDARY EARTH World Setting and details of special areas of that world.

As for D20 RPGs in other genres, I just don't have much time for playing--too much work to get done. Thus I miss a lot of stuff. For example, I really want to try a campaign of DEADLANDS, play some miniatures again, etc. That gives me something to look forward to when I retire--playing games instead of writing game material all the time.

As for new writers, other than those with whom I happen to be working with on some new product, I again must confess a lack of time for perusing much in the way of gaming material. the research material I need to read, and some fiction for relaxation and inspiration, pretty well fill what spare time I have.

Gary

Harlock

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 12:25 AM

Quote:

Originally posted by Col_Pladoh

As for new writers, other than those with whom I happen to be working with on some new product, I again must confess a lack of time for perusing much in the way of gaming material. the research material I need to read, and some fiction for relaxation and inspiration, pretty well fill what spare time I have.

Gary

If you swing toward evil on the alignment scale you could always become a reviewer when you retire. Sure, I know the obvious objections but hear me out. Reviewers get free RPG books (or since you mentioned fiction you could possibly try that) to read and review. You have name recognition with fans and writers. As a reviewer you don't have deadlines nearly as tedious as a writer. Obviously you cannot review every book some hack sends you and people would respect that. Which leads me to my next couple of questions:

What do you plan to do when you retire?

What do you do now as a break from writing? Of course reading previous responses I am not quite certain a "break from writing" may exist for you.

DDK

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 04:20 AM

Quote:

Originally posted by Col_Pladoh

That said, I am not giving up. I thought perhaps to do something modest based on the old work, and if that proves to be successful, moving ahead on the development of additional material, much as the original dungeons were created.

That would totally ROCK! If only I were worthy...

MerricB

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 04:35 AM

Thanks muchly for the answers, Gary.

Another question for you:

Do female beards have dwarves? ;)

The other thing I should say is to thank you very much for the gaming anecdotes you've been giving us in the "On a Soapbox" column in Dragon. (I can seem to remember wishing for stuff like that back when you first revealed yourself to us on these boards, and lo! it appeared!)

Cheers!

Nathal

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 05:29 AM

autobiography

Quote:

Originally posted by Col_Pladoh

...yes, and I have a few dozen pages done, but it's not really an autobiography yet, just a lot of recorded incidents and the like.

Gary

I remember asking Gary if he was ever going to write an autobiography and he responded, "when they are selling slushies in hell!". :P

Why the change of heart?:

Teedoff101

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 06:11 AM

Question for Gary: As you can tell, DnD has spawned into its own cult. Are you proud of creating a game that so many people (including myself) play constantly? My DM is a huge fan and when he is not doing work, I find him re-reading the DM guide or the Players Handbook for what seems to be the 10,000th time. Congrats on this great accomplishment Gary.

sword-dancer

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 07:41 AM

A few other questions from german threads, not from me.

Quote:

Why it gives Swords + 3 or something ???

Why is an Mage so Poweerless at the beginning ?

Why did you choose the vancian magic system ?

Col_Pladoh

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 02:14 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Harlock

If you swing toward evil on the alignment scale you could always become a reviewer when you retire.

What do you plan to do when you retire?

What do you do now as a break from writing? Of course reading previous responses I am not quite certain a "break from writing" may exist for you.

Heh, and many a reviewer is of evil alignment. Not a bad idea, though, especially if I could do history and imaginative fiction in the main.

If I ever retire, I'll spend more time playing games, read more again, and get in some travel too, perhaps. Of course reading and seeing different places inspires me to write...

When I need a break I usually read (non-gaming material) or watch something of interest on the telly. Now and then we get out to a movie or visit a friend. What I really need is a long vacation in some distant place--or at least a place different from the usual ;)

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 02:24 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Fourecks

That would totally ROCK! If only I were worthy...

Fact is that I have a very rough pencil sketch done of a castle--a map with some ideas as to how the original material and some new ideas might be merged to create a setting that contains elements of the original, plus added fun.

I'll fiddle with it now and then as I get time, meanwhile make notes and see what gels. If all that works, I'll have a good idea as to the size of the work projected, the time needed. Then it will be decided if it's a go or not. If it is a go of course I'll leave hooks in the module so as to allow for expansion if that's desired by the audience. That way a potentially massive project can be bitten off in "digestable" chunks. Furthermore, with a base done, I might be able to enlist co-designers to assist in the development of the possible whole. I do have--somewhere on this machine--a file outlining a version of the castle and dungeons that would reflect the original and be manageable as a series of releases.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 02:30 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by MerricB

Thanks muchly for the answers, Gary.

Another question for you:

Do female beards have dwarves? ;)

The other thing I should say is to thank you very much for the gaming anecdotes you've been giving us in the "On a Soapbox" column in Dragon. (I can seem to remember wishing for stuff like that back when you first revealed yourself to us on these boards, and lo! it appeared!)

Cheers!

Damn! I tried trolling this board a while back to see if I could get any anti-female-bearded-dwarf folks all het up. Lackaday! Seems that those folks have finally coped wise to the fact I was jesting.

Glad to learn you enjoy those little tales of the old days of D&Ding. Thank Dave Gross for getting me started. I have only a few left, though. Likely I should be writing more now, but as nobody from DRAGON is hollering at me, I'll not worry... :rolleyes:

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 02:35 PM

Re: autobiography

Quote:

Originally posted by Nathal

I remember asking Gary if he was ever going to write an autobiography and he responded, "when they are selling slushies in hell!". :P

Why the change of heart?:

Did I really say that? Hmm... No matter, as I am not seriously writing an autobiography, simply recording some memories of things that I liked, found amusing or telling. Fact is, though, that so many persons have urged me to do the deed that one day I might seriously undertake it. It is a lot of work, though, and organizing the material is quite a task in itself. Meantime, I have a lot of gaming stuff to look to :)

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 02:49 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Teedoff101

Question for Gary: As you can tell, DnD has spawned into its own cult. Are you proud of creating a game that so many people (including myself) play constantly? My DM is a huge fan and when he is not doing work, I find him re-reading the DM guide or the Players Handbook for what seems to be the 10,000th time. Congrats on this great accomplishment Gary.

No questuion that I am very happy to have created something that has brought so much fun and enjoyment to millions of people world wide! The best part is receiving emails from fellow gamers who have been helped in various ways by the game. That, amigo, is really heartening.

Secondarily, the creativity that my work has encouraged is also very satisfying to me. Fact is that I believe that RPGers are a well-above-average lot, and that they are also highly creative (and opinionated) group. The full results of the stimulation from the D&D game and other material I've done has yet to be seen and assessed. I am sure that there'll be some great things to come from this. Being the primer of the creative pump for so many people is somewhat overwhelming to me. In all, I hope that I did a good job of it, and I expect to be emulated soon, using that word in its true meaning :eek:

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 03:04 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by sword-dancer

A few other questions from german threads, not from me.

quote:

Why it gives Swords + 3 or something ???

Why is an Mage so Poweerless at the beginning ?

Why did you choose the vancian magic system ?

As for the +3, or whatever, on weapons or anything else, I am nor really sure of the reference here, the "it" in "Why it..." I'll take a stab at it anyway (pun intended): In creating a game there are certain systems used to reflect ther "magical." The plusses are a means to quantify "magic," the extraordinary.

Powerless magic-users at first level? Ha! That's an old question, and one I can deal with easily using the OAD&D rules, the main origination of the m-u in most play. Questioner, you be an ogre, a big strong 4th-level monster. I am a poor weak magic-user. We are at 30-foot distance. You move to attack, I cast my Sleep spell. You loose. So, now I'll be any other sort of PC, and you remain the ogre. You win...unless my character succeeds in running away.

The low-level magic-user is mainly a one- or two-shot weapon, but the "artillery" is potent. This fits well with a balanced party of low-level PCs, none of wom are really very strong singly.

I chose to use a system of magic inspired by the worls of Jack Vance because it fit the whole of the game I devised. For example, think of an archer with a quiver of arrows. When one is shot, it is gone. Magic spells, more potent than arrows, are much the same. So archers need to select their arrows before going forth to battle, so too the m-us in the game.

Gary



Q&A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Show 20 post(s) from this thread on one page

▼ Page 6 of 36 ◀◀ First ◀ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 ... ▶ Last ▶▶

Scott814thmpco

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 03:14 PM

Games Day

Hi Mr. Gygax

Games Plus in Mount Prospect Ill. is having a D&D games day Nov 9th, It would be really cool if you dropped by or better yet DM'ed some good o' 1st edition D&D.

Scott

Col_Pladoh

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 03:20 PM

Re: Games Day

Quote:

Originally posted by Scott814thmpco

Hi Mr. Gygax

Games Plus in Mount Prospect Ill. is having a D&D games day Nov 9th, It would be really cool if you dropped by or better yet DM'ed some good o' 1st edition D&D.

Scott

Hola Scott!

As I recall, I am slated to go to the gathering at Games Plus in Mt. Prospect--it's only a bit over an hour's drive from here in Lake Geneva. I'll be coming with Chris Clark and likely my son Alex.

As it stands, though, I am going to be running an LA game or the like--the LA fans were the ones who invited Chris and I to come about a month or so back.

Cheers,
Gary

Kershek

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 04:04 PM

Gary,

What did you think about the Dungeons & Dragons movie?

johnsemlak

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 05:06 PM

Questions for Gary

Questions:

1. Did you ever consider either adding more detail (a map, details of encounters, etc) of the drow city of Erelhei-Cinlu to D3, or publishing a separate product detailing Erelhei Cinlu?
2. In your own words, how would you summarize the difference between AD&D and Basic/Expert/etc. D&D?
3. How important do you feel the concept of 'character archetypes' is to the D&D game? Do you feel that 3e rules, by going away from having core character classes, has lost something important here?
4. In your campaign, was the dissident drow Nilonim from D3 ever a PC?

P.S. Please write a sequel to Necropolis.

Col_Pladoh

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 05:17 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Kershek

Gary,

What did you think about the Dungeons & Dragons movie?

I think of that flick as little as possible ;)

For a Grade B fantasy film it was passable because one could enjoy the few good bits and laugh at the rest. Otherwise, virtually nothing was right in it. Even the special effects were pretty mediocre. Anyway, no need to belabor the matter, as it is dead, very dead indeed...

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 05:29 PM

Re: Questions for Gary

Quote:

Originally posted by johnsemlak

Questions:

- 1. Did you ever consider either adding more detail (a map, details of encounters, etc) of the drow city of Erelhei-Cinlu to D3, or publishing a separate product detailing Erelhei Cinlu?**
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- 4. In your campaign, was the dissident drow Nilonim from D3 ever a PC?**

P.S. Please write a sequel to Necropolis.

Okay, and some answers:)

1. As I noted in an earlier response, the drow city in the vault is one that I did think about revisiting, expanding. Because such a project demanded considerable time and effort, it didn't happen, so now it's in WotC's hands.
2. I am not going to try to do critical comparative analyses here or in any chat. That's a task that demands much careful thinking and effort. The only thing I can say about the matter is this: Play the two and judge for yourself. I think that AD&D is a "tighter" game than D&D was, more directed, less free-form. However, that applies mainly to those DMs who followed the book, if you will, as AD&D could be played in the same style as D&D.
3. I feel very strongly that the archetype is crucial to the D&D game, and yes, I believe that 3E has suffered by virtually abandoning that concept. Without it I don't think the game will maintain so strong an appeal as it originally possessed. Time will tell.
4. The drow was strictly an invented NPC. None of my players ever showed much interest in playing drow. Of course, with well-established PCs going before the drow were introduced, that's likely a principal reason for such lack of interest.

As for the sequel to NECROPOLIS, as I mentioned before, it's in the hands of the gods. I need to be able to open some MAC+ files, find the maps I made around 1994 for a potential CRPG, then see how much work is involved in changing the adventure from a computer base to a paper one.

Gary

CrazyMage

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 05:52 PM

What are your favorite drinks, and when should I bring them over?;)

ColonelHardisson

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 06:01 PM

Re: Questions for Gary

Quote:

Originally posted by johnsemlak

3. How important do you feel the concept of 'character archetypes' is to the D&D game? Do you feel that 3e rules, by going away from having core character classes, has lost something important here?

This is a question both for the poster and for Gary - how does 3e *not* have these archetypes? How has 3e moved away from core character classes; it has as many (OK, a few more) as any other edition did? Is it easier multiclassing that seems to be the main difference, game-wise? I imagine many still play single-classed characters.

I'm not being argumentative; I genuinely don't understand this assertion. I've played D&D/AD&D for something like 22-23 years, and I don't see that much of a difference in 3e in this regard.

Col_Pladoh

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 06:04 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by CrazyMage

What are your favorite drinks, and when should I bring them over?;)

Hell, I'll drink just about anything :D Bombay Sapphire martinis top the list of apertifs, but I like manhattans too. Don't think there's a form of liquor I don't like, and beer or ale is fine--as long as it isn't mass-brewed crap or "light" stuff. Ugh!

Seriously, though, I don't usually imbibe during gaming sessions, and if it's hot and I decide to have a g&t, it's light on the gin and heavy on tonic and ice.

So, Whitewater isn't too far distant. Want to join the Thursday night LA game session here? We begin c. 6:30 and close at 10--everybody has a ways to drive to get home, or else needs to be up early for school:)

Cheers,
Gary

Col_Pladoh

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 06:11 PM

Re: Re: Questions for Gary

Quote:

Originally posted by ColonelHardisson

This is a question both for the poster and for Gary - how does 3e not have these archetypes?

No way I am going to get involved in a critical analysis of 3E now, amigo. I will say that while you suggest that some players stick with a single-class character, is that because of the way the game is done or in spite of it? Also, the way that skills and feats are presented tends to both encourage multi-classing while blurring the archetypes. Yes, one can still play 3E with archetypes, but the system does not encourage it, nor is that in the spirit of the system--gaining power.

That's all from me on this topic.

Gary

johnsemlak

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 06:23 PM

More Questions for Gary

Gary

Thanks for taking so much time to answer my and other people's questions.

1. A recent D20 product details the use of time-travel magic. I don't believe you have ever mentioned time travel in any of your D&D/AD&D material (am I wrong?), though it's a popular tool in fantasy literature. Do you think time travel poses difficult problems for the game?
2. Do you have an opinion on the use of firearms in D&D?
3. You are from Chicago, and fantasy gaming has strong roots in the Midwest, from Wierd Tales magazine to Gen Con 2002. Do you think there is any particular reason for that?

ColonelHardisson

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 07:29 PM

Re: Re: Re: Questions for Gary

Quote:

Originally posted by Col_Pladoh

No way I am going to get involved in a critical analysis of 3E now, amigo. I will say that while you suggest that some players stick with a single-class character, is that because of the way the game is done or in spite of it? Also, the way that skills and feats are presented tends to both encourage multi-classing while blurring the archetypes. Yes, one can still play 3E with archetypes, but the system does not encourage it, nor is that in the spirit of the system--gaining power.

That's all from me on this topic.

Gary

Hey, this is the kind of answer I was looking for! I figured that since it was brought up, I'd ask. You did want questions asked, right? :D

EDIT: Oh wait - this actually begs another question! What was the spirit of earlier editions. then? From the perspective of a player, 1e AD&D, for example seemed about gaining power also.

And remember - I learned to play by reading the 1e DMG and PHB, which you wrote... :)

Rel

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 09:26 PM

Gary, I've been a poster on these boards for a pretty good while now and I've always thought it was cool how you would drop by from time to time. I've rarely seen a figure of your importance to a hobby be quite so accessible to the fans as you are.

Anyhow, I felt the need to stop in and thank you from the bottom of my heart for how your creation has enhanced my life in so many ways. It kept me out of trouble when I was young and it helped me form friendships with guys who are like brothers to me to this day. It has made me more literate and creative. And someday it will hopefully give me a fun activity to pursue with my children (they need to get out of diapers first and stop trying to eat my dice) as it already does with my wife.

In short, I have gotten more unadulterated joy at a phenomenally low cost-per-hour from D&D and the many games it has spawned than I could

ever have hoped for in a hobby. For that you have my undying gratitude. Not to be excessively sycophantic but just imagining you reading these words gives me a touch of fan-boy glee.

But I'm not here just to suck up! I have a serious question:

Quote:

Originally posted by Col_Pladoh

Hell, I'll drink just about anything :D Bombay Sapphire martinis top the list of appertifs

How many olives do you take with that and what brand (if any) vermouth do you prefer? (excellent taste in gin regardless of your answer)

Col_Pladoh

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 10:10 PM

Re: More Questions for Gary

Quote:

Originally posted by johnsemlak

Gary

Thanks for taking so much time to answer my and other people's questions.

1. A recent D20 product details the use of time-travel magic. I don't believe you have ever mentioned time travel in any of your D&D/AD&D material (am I wrong?), though it's a popular tool in fantasy literature. Do you think time travel poses difficult problems for the game?

2. Do you have an opinion on the use of firearms in D&D?

3. You are from Chicago, and fantasy gaming has strong roots in the Midwest, from Wierd Tales magazine to Gen Con 2002. Do you think there is any particular reason for that?

Welcome:)

1. Somehow I can not relate time travel to fantasy per se. That is, I believe it belongs in the science fiction genre, something based on technology rather than magic. This is not to say I don't think time travel is interesting, and I have had it included in my own game campaign--a blend of both probability and time travel. The players did not like it... Anyway, I don't think it works well in fantasy.

2. I do not allow firearms to work in any of the campaigns I run, but I have had my players travel to other worlds, parallel ones, where firearms worked. There is no problem handling the damage caused by such weapons, but in my view such technological weapons are counter to the spirit of the fantasy game, and all things considered, quite unnecessary.

3. I was born in Chicago, lived there for my first eight years, then for about 10 more years--from age 19 on through 28. I worked in the city until near the end of 1970, gamed with many people from Chicago. There was a good bit of organized gaming there, and I did likewise in Lake Geneva, started GenCon here 35 years back. As to why there is such interest, I can speculate only. Winters are long here, so indoor activities are often pursued. Once game groups get started in an area, they tend to persist and proliferate too.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 10:14 PM

Re: Re: Re: Questions for Gary

Quote:

Originally posted by ColonelHardisson

Hey, this is the kind of answer I was looking for! I figured that since it was brought up, I'd ask. You did want questions asked, right? :D

EDIT: Oh wait - this actually begs another question! What was the spirit of earlier editions. then? From the perspective of a player, 1e AD&D, for example seemed about gaining power also.

And remember - I learned to play by reading the 1e DMG and PHB, which you wrote... ;)

Journalists and trail attorneys stuff, amigo ;) As I said, I don't care to go into a comparative analysis of the games, and they are very different games, as most everyone acknowledges. You can draw your own conclusions, eh?

Now, as for _wanting_ questions asked, heh! I simply agreed to do an online interview, and I am answering questions here so as to lessen the load when I get into the chatroom later today :p

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 10:25 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Rel

Gary, I've been a poster on these boards for a pretty good while now and I've always thought it was cool how you would drop by from time to time. I've rarely seen a figure of your importance to a hobby be quite so accessible to the fans as you are.

Thanks. What can I say other than to point out I am a gamer, and I generally respect and like my fellows, so I don't mind spending time kicking things about with them. One face sharpens the other too...

Quote:

Anyway, I felt the need to stop in and thank you from the bottom of my heart for how your creation has enhanced my life in so many ways. It kept me out of trouble when I was young and it helped me form friendships with guys who are like brothers to me to this day. It has made me more literate and creative. And someday it will hopefully give me a fun activity to pursue with my children (they need to get out of diapers first and stop trying to eat my dice) as it already does with my wife.

In short, I have gotten more unadulterated joy at a phenomenally low cost-per-hour from D&D and the many games it has spawned than I could ever have hoped for in a hobby. For that you have my undying gratitude. Not to be excessively sycophantic but just imaging you reading these words gives me a touch of fan-boy glee.

What you note above is what I posted about earlier when asked how I felt about doing work that influenced so many people in so positive a way. You know I am really encouraged when I read accounts such as yours :)

[/QUOTE]But I'm not here just to suck up! I have a serious question:

How many olives do you take with that and what brand (if any) vermouth do you prefer? (excellent taste in gin regardless of your answer) [/QUOTE]

Right! Well, in general if I have any vermouth at all, it will be a few drops of Martini & Rossi. I like blue cheese-stuffed jumbo olives (2) in a martini, or three small sweet onions in a gibson. Typically, though, I drink the Bombat Sapphire shaken sans any vermouth, straight up, with one small olive in a proper martini glass. In fact, a generous soul saw to it that I got a pair of them from the Bombay Gin company, each with a blue sphere where the stem meets the bowl of the glass :eek:

Small things can surely bring a lot of enjoyment...

Gary

Mortaneus

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 11:24 PM

Here's another one:

Of all the published D&D related items you've written (novels, rulebooks, adventures, etc), do you have any particular favorites? What was the most fun to write? The least?

johnsemlak

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 11:49 PM

[still more questions](#)

Gary

1. What are your favorite fantasy movies? And would you like to see a film based on a popular D&D module/adventure?
2. One of the primary limitations to the cleric class or related classes has been the prohibition of edged weapons. This was based, to my knowledge, upon the prohibition among medieval priests against spilling Christian blood (I don't think they had a problem with spilling infidel blood). I believe the Pope Julius was known to charge into battle with mace and beat opponents to death.

However, did you ever feel it was a bit unrealistic to extend this to all priests, including evil priests, not to mention the general concept that it was/is ok for a priest to bash an opponent to death (somehow without spilling blood) but not to use edged weapons?

That's all I can think of.

Good luck in your future gaming and publishing. I really hope you somehow return to writing material for WoG. I'd most like to see you do more drow material, though other authors have done much of that already.

Cheers

John Semlak

ColonelHardisson

Wednesday, 4th September, 2002, 11:57 PM

Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Questions for Gary

Quote:

Originally posted by Col_Pladoh

Journalists and trail attorneys stuff, amigo ;) As I said, I don't care to go into a comparative analysis of the games, and they are very different games, as most everyone acknowledges. You can draw your own conclusions, eh?

Actually, I don't want you to do a qualitative comparison between games. I'm not a raving d20 fanboy (well, not *that* way, at least) that sees no value in anything printed prior to the turn of the millennium (or close to it). I played AD&D 1st edition for well over a decade. I'm actually interested in what you feel the spirit of older editions was. It doesn't have to entail anything about other games. One could surmise a certain mood or feel for the game based upon the fiction you gave as recommended reading in the DMG. However, older editions/versions of the game seemed to have a different feel from the later AD&D. Can you articulate what that was?

This isn't a grilling - Sorry if it seemed like that (I'm certainly no trial lawyer or journalist, and don't mean to come off that way). I'm asking for some artistic commentary from you. Like when Steven Spielberg is interviewed and he tells about what symbolism was used in a film he's made, or why he made particular artistic choices. OK, so maybe not that involved, but along those lines. Does that make sense? It doesn't have to be about the game overall; I'd be interested in, for example, knowing what directly influenced the "Giants" series, or the "Drow" series.

MerricB

Thursday, 5th September, 2002, 01:27 AM

O, Great Gygax, who we implore to not let the rust monsters near our vorpal swords...

You've mentioned the weakening of the archetypes in the 3E system - I'm unfamiliar with your Lejendary Adventures game, save that it is 'rules lite', but I was wondering if you used archetypes in that system, or another approach altogether?

Cheers!

Q&A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Show 20 post(s) from this thread on one page

Page 7 of 36 ◀ First ◀ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 ... ▶ Last ▶▶

reiella

Thursday, 5th September, 2002, 01:29 AM

Fun clarification, chat is currently going on. The website is misprinted with it being from 8pm central. It started at 7 central.

Dahak

Thursday, 5th September, 2002, 07:26 AM

Re: Re: Questions for Gary

Quote:

Originally posted by Col_Pladoh

As for the sequel to NECROPOLIS, as I mentioned before, it's in the hands of the gods. I need to be able to open some MAC+ files, find the maps I made around 1994 for a potential CRPG, then see how much work is involved in changing the adventure from a computer base to a paper one.

Hi Gary!

Was the CRPG in question the Dangerous Journeys game that was advertised back in some of the old DJ books as coming for the Turbo Grafx 16/Turbo Duo game console? I remember debating about buying the console at the time, in anticipation of the game's release (thankfully I did not).

Eternalknight

Thursday, 5th September, 2002, 09:56 AM

Gary, here are a few questions as I won't be able to make the chat.

- 1) How long did it take you to write the original version of D&D? Or, in other words, when did you come up with the idea and how long did it take to get it into print?
- 2) I have been reading your Up On A Soapbox columns in Dragon and really enjoy them. Your commentry on some of your gaming sessions brings back memories about when i first started playing. Unfortunately, I can't seem to get that same 'feeling' now when i DM. Any advice?
- 3) Would you consider D&D (in any of its incarnations) as your favourite game? If no, which game would be your favourite?

Thanee

Thursday, 5th September, 2002, 10:26 AM

I just wanted to add, that I really liked the way you answered the questions here (i.e. taking the time to read and answer pretty much everything, especially the fun and ... inappropriate questions :))!

Very cool! :)

Bye
Thanee

Voadam

Thursday, 5th September, 2002, 02:58 PM

original MM question

Is there a story or myth behind why rakshasas can be instantly slain by a blessed crossbow bolt? I have never come across one and it seems an odd enough specific vulnerability to be based off of a real myth.

Col_Pladoh

Thursday, 5th September, 2002, 03:11 PM

Yesterday afternoon I tried to get on here and answer the last few posts, but for some reason I was unable to--the computer kept crashing when I tried to enter my responses, so...

Quote:

Originally posted by Mortaneus
Here's another one:

Of all the published D&D related items you've written (novels, rulebooks, adventures, etc), do you have any particular favorites? What was the most fun to write? The least?

As I have mentioned, some projects are really a breeze to write, as inspiration rush makes the work seem to create itself. Others are done with much labor and many revisions. The end effect is usually greater satisfaction when the latter sort of project is finished, so that in balance, all come out with about the same level of enjoyment.

I admit to having a lot of fun wwriting the giants and drow series, but that was mainly because of anticipation of DMing the adventures for my group and the play-test group at TSR. The novels were a lot of fun to write too, particularly the Gord short stories, as that form of writing seems to demand more than a novel does.

Because I do love games and writing, I must admit I love all the work I do. However, writing modules is becoming more and more a chore because I do not want to repeat anything that has been done before by me, so creating something that is different and fresh is commensurately more difficult.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Thursday, 5th September, 2002, 03:21 PM

Re: still more questions

Quote:

Originally posted by johnsemlak

Gary

1. What are your favorite fantasy movies? And would you like to see a film based on a popular D&D module/adventure?

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Good luck in your future gaming and publishing. I really hope you somehow return to writing material for WoG. I'd most like to see you do more drow material, though other authors and done much of that already.

Cheers

John Semlak

Right to the chase here!

1. My favorite fantasy films are the Harry Potter one and the LotR movie, in that order. There are a lot of movies that I feel have a great fantasy theme, even though they are not in that genre. For example, KING KONG and THE DEEP. Anyway, now that we have two exceptionally well done and profitable fantasy major motion pictures, more such films can be expected, and I don't man only more Harry Potter ones and the other two Rings films.

2. In seeking clear class distinctions I did indeed proscribe m-us from the use of the sword, and clerics too. This made the archetypes distinct, balanced the character classes, and worked well enough for game purposes, methinks.

As for unrealistic, heh! Let's talk about magic and monsters in that term... Actually, when initially writing the cleric class, I did not contemplate much interest in PCs of evil sort. Of course I often had my evil cleric NPCs using proscribed weapons, so I am not all bunched up about changes in the matter--save for game balance. If something new is allowed, then some compensating restriction is likely in order.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Thursday, 5th September, 2002, 03:46 PM

Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Questions for Gary

Quote:

Originally posted by ColonelHardisson

Actually, I don't want you to do a qualitative comparison between games. I'm not a raving d20 fanboy (well, not that way, at least) that sees no value in anything printed prior to the turn of the millennium (or close to it). I played AD&D 1t edition for well over a decade. I'm actually interested in what you feel the spirit of older editions was. It doesn't have to entail anything about other games. One could surmise a certain mood or feel for the game based upon the fiction you gave as recommended reading in the DMG. However, older editions/versions of the game seemed to have a different feel from the later AD&D. Can you articulate what that was?

Being close to the matter, it is difficult to write with clear objectivity. About all I can say is the enthusiasm and the love of the game were possibly conveyed to the reader by the style in which I wrote the material. Also, some of the rules and mechanics that were included in the original, removed later on, were actually critical to the "feel" and the "spirit" of the whole work.

That's about all I can relate, Colonel.

Quote:

This isn't a grilling - Sorry if it seemed like that (I'm certainly no trial lawyer or journalist, and don't mean to come off that way). I'm asking for some artistic commentary from you. Like when Steven Spielberg is interviewed and he tells about what symbolism was used in a film he's made, or why he made particular artistic choices. OK, so maybe not that involved, but along those lines. Does that make sense? It doesn't have to be about the game overall; I'd be interested in, for example, knowing what directly influenced the "Giants"

series, or the "Drow" series.

Okay, and I understand. I really don't want to get into long essays on my creative choices either, as I am not all that enthralled with such an approach to what I consider a craft at best ;)

Most of the influences on my creative work were acquired from childhood on--my father's bedtime stories about wizards with magic rings, cloaks of invisibility, my mother fairy tales and adventure stories reading to me. I read Bradbury's "The Veldt" in 1948, in BLUEBOOK Magazine, IIRC. That was about the same time I found a copy of Burrough's CAVE GIRL and Howard's CONAN novel. While I read Poe and a lot of military history, from 1950 on I was a devoted SF and fantasy fan, read a book or pulpo zine or two a day. (Back then my reading speed was about 600 words a minute.)

So, to answer directly, the majority of what I used to create back in 1970 and onwards from there was material inculcated and gained over some two or three decades prior. Of course I haven't ceased reading and being inspired. For example, one has to love "luggage" in the "Diskworld" books :D the main inspiration for the adventure material was the D&D game itself, my love for Dming and playing it.

And that's a fact. The reason I now write mainly using the LA game as a base is because of that very thing. I really am enthused by that system, as I find it brings back the same sort of feel I had back in those early days.

Hope that serves, amogo,
Gary

Col_Pladoh

Thursday, 5th September, 2002, 03:52 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by MerricB

O, Great Gyax, who we implore to not let the rust monsters near our vorpal swords...

You've mentioned the weakening of the archetypes in the 3E system - I'm unfamiliar with your Legendary Adventures game, save that it is 'rules lite', but I was wondering if you used archetypes in that system, or another approach altogether?

Cheers!

good question. Yes indeed, even though the LA game system is skill-bundle-based so as to allow broad latitude in character creation, I included what are termed in the game "Orders." If a player decides to have an Avatar that belongs to an Order, then the initial four of five "Abilities" (skill-bundles) are prescribed. Orders are archetype characters--the Ecclesiastic, Elementalist, Mage, etc. By doing this I hope to have managed the best of both worlds, all the while having a non-complicated and easy skills system.

Cheerio,
Gary

Col_Pladoh

Thursday, 5th September, 2002, 04:07 PM

Re: Re: Re: Questions for Gary

Quote:

Originally posted by Dahak

Hi Gary!

Was the CRPG in question the Dangerous Journeys game that was advertised back in some of the old DJ books as coming for the Turbo Grafx 16/Turbo Duo game console? I remember debating about buying the console at the time, in anticipation of the game's release (thankfully I did not).

Howdy!

No, the bogus lawsuit filed by T&R back in the 90s closed the door on the deal we had with Nintendo/JVC. After that I did a number of CRPG designs, two of which that were optioned for development but never got into production for reasons not related to the game itself.

Anyway, the material I am speaking of was not one of the two game designs sold, but rather one that was a stand alone product. I never got it far enough along to do a formal proposal to any publisher. After the second CRPG (after the MYTHUS ONE) was accepted, word came on a Monday it was going forward into development, and on Wednesday we were told the company was sold and all projects were being canned, I decided I would return to paper games once again... Thus that design, along with some 20 or so others is languishing somewhere in this place, in disk limbo if you will.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Thursday, 5th September, 2002, 04:23 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Eternalknight

Gary, here are a few questions as I won't be able to make the chat.

1) How long did it take you to write the original version of D&D? Or, in other words, when did you come up with the idea and how long did it take to get it into print?

2) I have been reading your Up On A Soapbox columns in Dragon and really enjoy them. Your commentary on some of your gaming

sessions brings back memories about when i first started playing. Unfortunately, I can't seem to get that same 'feeling' now when i DM. Any advice?

3) Would you consider D&D (in any of its incarnations) as your favourite game? If no, which game would be your favourite?

Well, here you are, answers a day late, but hopefully not short...

1. The initial 50 page draft of what was to become the D&D game took me only about two weeks to write--around November of 1972. After all, most of the material was drawn from the CHAINMAIL Fantasy Supplement, so it wasn't a real challenge. I then sent the draft around to a dozen or two of my wargaming comrades. The positive response was overwhelming, and from my own play-testing and the many letters and phone calls received from the other testers, I revised the initial material into a draft of some 150 pages--essentially what appeared in the three booklets of the boxed D&D set. That revision took place in the early spring of 1973. When Tactical Studies Rules was formed as a partnership by Don Kaye and I in October of 1973, we produced a military miniatures rules set as the first product, as that was all we could afford. Then, when we took in a new partner, the D&D ms.went to the printer's, so the game was published and sold in January 1974. By that time I was working on the new material thyat appeared in the GREYHAWK Supplement some considerable time later.

2. Go back to playng OAD&D, perhaps. I find that when I D< using the old material I am as enthused as ever--of course I still enjoy DMing OAD&D with the same zest as I did "way back when." If you want to change systems, take a peek at the LA material. It is now my system of choice because I find it facilitates my sense of wonder in regards to fantasy gamning.

3. Actually, see above for my feelings in regards to :favorite." While i love games, and the one I am playing at the time is the current "favorite," most likely, for long-term involvement I place the LA game, OD&D/AD&D, and METAMORPHOSIS ALPHA at the top. Of course I would like to try to get in some other genres there too, and when I have less writing to do, more playing time, I'll do that ;)

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Thursday, 5th September, 2002, 04:25 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Thanee

I just wanted to add, that I really liked the way you answered the questions here (i.e. taking the time to read and answer pretty much everything, especially the fun and ... inappropriate questions ;))!

Very cool! :)

***Bye
Thanee***

Thanks:) Actually I am happy to do this, because "chatting" with fellow gamers is almost as much fun as playing games with them. Okay, okay, I am a game geek!

:eek:

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Thursday, 5th September, 2002, 04:29 PM

Re: original MM question

Quote:

Originally posted by Voadam

Is there a story or myth behind why rakshasas can be instantly slain by a blessed crossbow bolt? I have never come across one and it seems an odd enough specific vulnerability to be based off of a real myth.

Heh, and there surely is. There was a TV show, THGE NIGHT STALKER, that had an episode in which rakshas were the featured monster. In that program these demons could be slain thus, rather like the way a vampire would be by a blessed wooden crossbow bolt through the heart. So I thought that it would be a good idea to follow that lead.

Gary

Darklance

Thursday, 5th September, 2002, 08:07 PM

Has Jack Chick ever contacted you so he could chastise you for creating the object of his hatred? You are after all responsible for duping thousands across the world into worshipping Satan....

Col_Pladoh

Thursday, 5th September, 2002, 08:34 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Darklance

Has Jack Chick ever contacted you so he could chastise you for creating the object of his hatred? You are after all responsible for duping thousands across the world into worshipping Satan....

Oddly enough, no. In fact, the only anti-D&D group that ever did contact and interview me is a fundamentalist Christian organization that publishes a magazine called CORNERSTONE. The interviewer was polite, the resulting article in the magazine allowed I was merely misguided, not a deeply evil pro-satanist sort of person...

And speaking of people not contacting me, I surely do wish I'd get more feedback in regards my most recent adventure module, THE HERMIT! I know it played well in the LA format, and I'd sure like to hear how the D20 version rates :eek:

Gary

Upper_Krust

Thursday, 5th September, 2002, 11:05 PM

Hi Gary! :)

Does the HALL OF MANY PANES give a nod to Gravestone's Demiplane defenses in Come Endless Darkness (?) and if not have you ever thought of writing a module based on that sort of 'Run the Gauntlet' idea?

Col_Pladoh

Thursday, 5th September, 2002, 11:25 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Upper_Krust
Hi Gary! :)

Does the HALL OF MANY PANES give a nod to Gravestone's Demiplane defenses in Come Endless Darkness (?) and if not have you ever thought of writing a module based on that sort of 'Run the Gauntlet' idea?

Hola Amigo:)

The plot for the HALL OF MANY PANES involves some rival deities--ones you might enjoy, as they are based on Celtic ones, modified for the game's world setting of course, and called the Daneen Pantheon.

Anyway, the demiplane exists because a deity created it, and the team of adventurers who get sent there must visit the many other dimensions that are accessed from it through enchanted portals that float about the "Panes" in the "Hall." Of course, there are dozens of such gateways to other places, and no two are exactly alike, some wildly different from others.

Cheers,
Gary

COZ

Thursday, 5th September, 2002, 11:48 PM

Gary, I remember reading a Dragon magazine editorial from way back by you where you spoke of some new medieval live action group and you mentioned something about prior involvement in the SCA. Could you shed any more light on the subject of you in armor swinging rattan at another guy's head (for some reason I just picture you as a 'stick jock').

Just how many children do you have? Have any of them gone on to game design?

And who played those original Greyhawk adventurers who became famous NPCs?

Upper_Krust

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 12:14 AM

Quote:

Originally posted by Col_Pladoh
Hola Amigo:)

Hey Gary! :)

Quote:

Originally posted by Col_Pladoh
The plot for the HALL OF MANY PANES involves some rival deities--ones you might enjoy, as they are based on Celtic ones, modified for the game's world setting of course, and called the Daneen Pantheon.

Celtic Pantheon you say...interesting. Too often sidelined in favour of the 'big three'.

Incidentally I caught the veiled musings of Tharizdun in Dance of Demons wherein he indirectly equates himself with the Celtic Deity Cernun/Cernunnos. :)

I still want to see you do the definitive work on Egyptian Mythology of course! :D

I'm curious, have you ever been to Egypt?

Quote:

Originally posted by Col_Pladoh
Anyway, the demiplane exists because a deity created it, and the team of adventurers who get sent there must visit the many other dimensions that are accessed from it through enchanted portals that float about the "Panes" in the "Hall." Of course, there are dozens of such gateways to other places, and no two are exactly alike, some wildly different from others.

I have been looking forward to it since you first mentioned it on these boards a while back.

As I recall didn't you say it can be utilised at myriad levels? After Gaxmoor and Necropolis are conquered it sounds like the Hall of Many Panes could be next on the agenda... ;)

davidschwartznz

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 03:30 AM

Gary, you've mentioned elements of 3E that differ from your original vision. Is there anything in the new rules that you think improves on that vision?

▼ Page 7 of 36 ◀◀ First ◀ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 ... ▶ Last ▶▶

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Col_Pladoh

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 02:35 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by coz

Gary, I remember reading a Dragon magazine editorial from way back by you where you spoke of some new medieval live action group and you mentioned something about prior involvement in the SCA. Could you shed any more light on the subject of you in armor swinging rattan at another guy's head (for some reason I just picture you as a 'stick jock').

Just how many children do you have? Have any of them gone on to game design?

And who played those original Greyhawk adventurers who became famous NPCs?

Well, that's going back a ways. In the early 70s there were a few SCA members here in Lake Geneva, two of whom played in my D&D campaign. I did indeed wield a rattan sword with helmet and shield, but only in practise. I never did join the SCA or make armor and costume. As is still the case, gaming kept me too busy for that. Lacking proper leg protection, I still sport the broken blood vessels where enemy swords impacted leg. Never felt the pain of impact at the time though--too worked up with battle lust :eek:

I have six children, Ernie, Elise, Heidi, Cindy, Luke, and Alex. All have played D&D. The three boys still game. Ernie and Luke combined to write the LOST CITY OF GAXMOOR module, D20 by Troll Lord Games. Ernie's work prevents him from doing more design, and it seems likely that Luke too is facing that same stricture--writing adventure material demands a lot of time and effort. Luke is going to try to get to a sequel, THE LOST UNDERCITY (of Gaxmoor), but it will be some months before he can begin. Neither son wants any interference from their father. Alex is only 15, soon 16. He is a good player and fair GM too, but I don't think he'll be a dedicated writer. Such is life.

Lastly, when I started the Greyhawk campaign, the initial playtesters were son Ernie (Tenser, Serten, Erac's Cousin) and daughter Elise. In a couple of days time Don Kaye (Murlynd), Rob (Robilar, Otto) and Terry (Terik) Kuntz joined the gang. Of course in a few months we had a crowd of 20 and more persons, and when some split off to form their own campaign new people were there to take their places.

As Rob had begun his own campaign, I played a lot in it with various PCs--Yrag, Mordenkainen, Bigby, etc. I enlisted Rob as co-Dm for my campaign too, as it took two of us to manage the large player groups, and also to run all the game sessions demanded by smaller parties. Often times there were two long sessions a day in 1974 and 1975. I had to write material, so Rob ran many of them.

A few years later son Luke played Melf.

That's it:)

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 02:58 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Upper_Krust

Hey Gary! :)

Celtic Pantheon you say...interesting. Too often sidelined in favour of the 'big three'.

Yes, and to rectify that I have devised 20 pantheons for the LEJENDARY EARTH World Setting, with various major and minor states thereon having one or another as the recognized one. Thus I hope to encourage greater diversity in this regard.

Quote:

Incidently I caught the veiled musings of Tharizdun in Dance of Demons wherein he indirectly equates himself with the Celtic Deity Cernun/Cernunnos. :)

Heh. Caught me! I was reading a lot of mythology at the time, so I couldn't resist slipping that into the novel.

Quote:

I still want to see you do the definitive work on Egyptian Mythology of course! :D

I'm curious, have you ever been to Egypt?

I have a huge number of Egyptian deities identified and awaiting their appearance in the LEJENDARY PANTHEONS sourcebook--whenever it gets into print. The Egyptian Pantheon is the largest one, and that's saying something, considering the Greco-Roman one. The ms. has been done in rough for about three years time now, just needs polishing. Of course by treating 20 pantheons for a FRPG setting, no great details are

given. That will have to await additional books that deal with a pantheon or several of them more minutely.

The problem in regards to the latter is details. There just aren't a lot of details, or any in some cases, for many pantheons, or deities therein. Additionally, where information is relatively abundant, much of it is pretty valueless when moving the deities to a fantasy world where they are active and potent, and the society is thus different and more technologically (and intellectually) advanced.

As for visiting Egypt, sadly no. Not likely to attempt a trip there anytime soon now either :(The only place in Africa I have managed to visit is Morocco, which I really loved.

Quote:

I have been looking forward to it since you first mentioned it on these boards a while back.

As I recall didn't you say it can be utilised at myriad levels? After Gaxmoor and Necropolis are conquered it sounds like the Hall of Many Panes could be next on the agenda... :)

Appreciate the interest. The HALL' is mant for experienced players, for there will be diverse approaches needed to manage the dozens of secnarios to be managed therein. I have used the LA game system to create it, so it's aa bit difficult to estimate the PC level as it now stands-- Jon Creffield is adding the D20 material now. I should think average level 8-10 for, but the DM could easilt upgrade the encounters by including more opponents, or giving them more HD and damage potential, so as to handle PCs of 12-14 levels. Of course some places in the adventure level 20-30 PCs will be lost unless they are played properly, thinking is used rather than reliance on combat and magic.

Ciao,
Gary

Col_Pladoh

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 03:02 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by davidschwartznz

Gary, you've mentioned elements of 3E that differ from your original vision. Is there anything in the new rules that you think improves on that vision?

A valid query, and one that I wish I could answer properly. The fact is that as 3E is actually a different game from AD&D, both Original and 2E, there isn't any way to do so. That is, new D&D is a game unto itself, and in such case the axiom about comparisons being odious seems to apply.

Gary

ColonelHardisson

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 03:02 PM

Gary - would you like to see the Epic of Aerth see the light of day again? I think it's a great setting, and could easily be used for any number of game systems.

Col_Pladoh

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 03:11 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by ColonelHardisson

Gary - would you like to see the Epic of Aerth see the light of day again? I think it's a great setting, and could easily be used for any number of game systems.

Yes indeed, Colonel Sir! :) The time and effort I spent getting the details into the EoA work were considerable. When I wrote it I hoped it would supply the sort of information that would benefit any fantasy campaign setting. What with the way things are going at WotC, likely it could be picked up pretty reasonably by some publisher.

Ciao,
Gary

ColonelHardisson

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 03:14 PM

Yes, let's hope somebody does get hold of it. It's one of the most underrated settings ever.

Col_Pladoh

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 03:21 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by ColonelHardisson

Yes, let's hope somebody does get hold of it. It's one of the most underrated settings ever.

Heh, all I can say is that I spent about five years putting it together--not all the time working on it alone, of course. The set of Eleventh Edition ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA that my most honored maternal grandfather bequeathed to me was much used in developing the details given in the EoA. What I longed for was a set of the Third Edition to reruse so as to perhaps get closer to the actual area conditions, but never was I able to find one...

Gary

Don't feel compelled to reply to this, Gary, but I just had to share it:

The other night when I got home from work, I told my wife that I had corresponded with Gary Gygax on the ENWorld boards. She is a very casual gamer and said, "Who's Gary Gygax?"

I explained your significance to the hobby to her and how cool it was to talk to you and she proceeded to give me a lighthearted ribbing about being a geek fanboy.

I responded with, "Well, you like horseback riding. Imagine you got to swap messages with the guy who invented horses."

She said, "You mean, God?"

I said, "Yeah."

She said, "I'm not sure it would be quite the same as you talking to Gary Gygax."

I said, "Of course not. God probably doesn't drink Martinis."

Anyhow, thanks again for taking the time to answer my (admittedly irrelevant to gaming) question.
:D

LoPaC

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 04:22 PM

Hey Gary.

Im suprised no one has asked you this yet, but whats your take on these WotC lay-offs?

Duorin III

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 05:16 PM

lol

What is your favorite color?

darth

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 07:21 PM

Books and Influences

One of the ways that DnD influenced my life positively was the books that I read because of it. Of course, I had already read LOTR and C.S. Lewis's Chronicles of Narnia, but it was at Gary's suggestion that I read Fritz Lieber, Jack Vance, and Michael Moorcock. Other RPGs have gotten me to read HP Lovecraft and his circle, including the great Robert Howard.

One of my great interests right now is the development of fantasy as we know the genre today. Certainly, EGG has been one of the more influential names in the landscape. Many of the assumptions we make about a fantasy world come from him and from DnD.

Two questions, then, for the good sir:

What other books and authors might you suggest? I'd love to hear of ones that influenced you, or ones you think anyone might benefit by reading.

What are some things you're proud to have personally added to the landscape of fantasy? Obviously, many of your ideas were taken from previous sources (that's the topic of my research), but what ones do you credit to yourself, or to early DnD?

Deedlit

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 08:46 PM

It's me again. Three questions for you

1. Are you familiar with Lodoss war?
2. If the answer to the first is yes, what do you think of it?
3. How does it feel knowing about all the series caused by your game, and people wanting to turning their campaign in it(Or a similar game created because of it's shortcomings), to a great fantasy series. Dragonlance, Lodoss War, and Forgotten Realms come to mind.

Geoffrey

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 08:50 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Col_Pladoh

Heh, all I can say is that I spent about five years putting it [Epic of Aerth] together--not all the time working on it alone, of course. The set of Eleventh Edition ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA that my most honored maternal grandfather bequeathed to me was much used in developing the details given in the EoA. What I longed for was a set of the Third Edition to reruse so as to perhaps get closer to the actual area conditions, but never was I able to find one...

Gary

The hard work you put into it shows, Mr. Gygax. Aerth is my favorite generic FRPG world out of all the multitude published. In the forward to the original Necropolis, Lester Smith (I think) mentioned that Aerth has its roots in your unpublished world of Oerth (with the published Oerth being a very different version). Can you expand on that?

Lightfinger

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 09:17 PM

Gary,

What is your opinion on the RPGA?

What's it like working with Steve, Davis, and the rest of the Troll Lords?

What have you heard about Troll Lord's sponsored national campaign, Legends of Erde?

--David

Col_Pladoh

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 10:22 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Rel

[snippage]

She said, "I'm not sure it would be quite the same as you talking to Gary Gyax."

I said, "Of course not. God probably doesn't drink Martinis."

:D

ROTFLMAO

But seriously, if God was making the martinis, I'm sure they'd be the best ever. As for Him not drinking them, well, He did give us wine...

:rolleyes:

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 10:27 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by LoPaC

Hey Gary.

Im suprised no one has asked you this yet, but whats your take on these WotC lay-offs?

It came as no surprise to me, as I'd heard that more were coming after GenCon, also that Hasbro planned to move the WotC offices back East to be under their wing, so to speak. Whether what I was told was merely lucky guessing or some inside scoop doesn't matter now.

In all I've been very charry about the acquisition of a hobby game company by a mass-market toy and game one. Two very different cultures, markets, and IMO management needs for assuring the success of the different lines.

Let us watch awhile to see what further developments take place...

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 10:28 PM

Re: lol

Quote:

Originally posted by Duorin III

What is your favorite color?

Rainbow and the permutations thereof!

:eek:

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 10:41 PM

Re: Books and Influences

Quote:

Originally posted by darth

One of the ways that DnD influenced my life positively was the books that I read because of it. Of course, I had already read LOTR and C.S. Lewis's Chronicles of Narnia, but it was at Gary's suggestion that I read Fritz Lieber, Jack Vance, and Michael Moorcock. Other RPGs have gotten me to read HP Lovecraft and his circle, including the great Robert Howard.

Hey now! Look at my recommended reading list in the old DMG again, amigo. Both Howard and Lovecraft are named there and were actually major influences on my creation of the game.

Quote:

One of my great interests right now is the development of fantasy as we know the genre today. Certainly, EGG has been one of the more influential names in the landscape. Many of the assumptions we make about a fantasy world come from him and from DnD.

Two questions, then, for the good sir:

What other books and authors might you suggest? I'd love to hear of ones that influenced you, or ones you think anyone might benefit by reading.

The aforementioned appendix in the OAD&D DMG has a pretty exhaustive list of those books I felt were influential and interesting--Merritt, Saberhagen, St, Clair, and Weinbaum for example. Also, if you happen to get a look at the MYTHUS game book, look for the recommended reading lists therein.

Quote:

What are some things you're proud to have personally added to the landscape of fantasy? Obviously, many of your ideas were taken from previous sources (that's the topic of my research), but what ones do you credit to yourself, or to early DnD?

Heh, well, what is around now that wasn't "taken" from some other source. The trick is to combine existing elements so as to come up with something new and different from what was previously existing. That D&D did right well, methinks. So, what I am pleased with is authoring D&D and thus creating the source of inspiration for the whole RPG field we have today;)

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 10:48 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Deedlit

It's me again. Three questions for you

1. Are you familiar with Lodoss war?

2. If the answer to the first is yes, what do you think of it?

3. How does it feel knowing about all the series caused by your game, and people wanting to turning their campaign in it(Or a similar game created because of it's shortcomings), to a great fantasy series. Dragonlance, Lodoss War, and Forgotten Realms come to mind.

1. Good old PA sent me the Lodoss War material, but I haven't had time yet to sit back and watch. I mean to for sure as the weather turns less mild here and being outdoors is not longer pleasant.

2. As noted, that's not currenbtly answerable.

3. To have inspired so much creativity, to have thus provided enjoyable employment for many a gamer is as gratifying to me as is the fact that I brought so much fun and entertainment to millions of people :) In fact, I am still trying to to the latter now, 30 years later.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 10:59 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Geoffrey

The hard work you put into it shows, Mr. Gygax. Aerth is my favorite generic FRPG world out of all the multitude published. In the forward to the original Necropolis, Lester Smith (I think) mentioned that Aerth has its roots in your unpublished world of Oerth (with the published Oerth being a very different version). Can you expand on that?

Thanks, Geoffrey :)

It was Les who put that into the forward, and yes, I can expand on it a bit.

When I initiated the Greyhawk campaign, I envisaged a world of parallel earth sort. Thus the geography then assumed was pretty close to that of earth. Being busy running game sessions, creating dungeon levels, the map of Greyhawk City, writing new material, and also really enjoying "winging it," I never did a large-scale map for the world.

When IU was asked to create a campaign setting for TSR to market, I did a new and compact "world"--that only in part, of course, as that was all I could fit onto the two maps allowed. So that became the World og Greyhawk.

At that point my campaign play gradually moved from the amorphous "real" planet on which Greyhawk was located to the material one published by TSR. Being busy as ever, saving what amounted to duplicate labor was happily accepted.

After the split with TSR, I returned to my original concept, painted over a globe of the earth to match my original ideas for a fantasy alternate earth, and thus Aerth was born. My wife and some others thought I'd lost it when they saw me with acrylics and brushes altering the globe:) I still have it around somewhere...

Only after I had the fully done globe of Aerth did I then set about the research needed to quantify all that was thereon.

Ciao,
Gary

Col_Pladoh

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 11:13 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Lightfinger***Gary,*****What is your opinion on the RPGA?******What's it like working with Steve, Davis, and the rest of the Troll Lords?******What have you heard about Troll Lord's sponsored national campaign, Legends of Erde?*****--David**

Howdy!

In my estimation the RPGA is still a useful adjunct to WotC, but its service to the majority of gamers is somewhat questionable. From what I know it is now mainly a tournament-running organization in which DMs and players interested in ranking are much involved. This not only narrows the scope that should be offered, but to my mind sort of makes it an exclusive, not inclusive association.

You know I just _have_ to like Steve, Davis (who looks a lot like my old buddy Skip), and company. They are great guys!

I keep Steve so busy with my stuff, mss. and emails about this or that change, that he doesn't have time to tell me about "other stuff," so this is the first I've heard about national campaign based on Erde.

Gary

LoPaC

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 11:14 PM

Sorry I'm asking another opinion question, but what do you think about d20 Modern? I've heard a lot of different things about last minute changes to the gaming system, so I'm just curious what your view on the game itself and anything else about it.

Col_Pladoh

Friday, 6th September, 2002, 11:20 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by LoPaC****Sorry I'm asking another opinion question, but what do you think about d20 Modern? I've heard a lot of different things about last minute changes to the gaming system, so I'm just curious what your view on the game itself and anything else about it.***

Heh, and we all know what opinions are usually likened to, eh?

Anyway, I haven't actually tried playing a D20 modern game, but from my gut feeling as a designer, I don't think the system will translate well to the genre. Now watch some talented guy come up with a kick-ass game and make an ass of me for venturing that :)

Cheers,
Gary

davidschwartznz

Saturday, 7th September, 2002, 03:24 AM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col_Pladoh****A valid query, and one that I wish I could answer properly. The fact is that as 3E is actually a different game from AD&D, both Original and 2E, there isn't any way to do so. That is, new D&D is a game unto itself, and in such case the axiom about comparisons being odious seems to apply.*****Gary**

From your perspective, what makes 3E a different game from AD&D? Is it just the 'd20 system' or are there other elements?

You've suggested that d20 is rules heavy (perhaps it is). But do you think it's more complicated than 2E?

MerricB

Saturday, 7th September, 2002, 06:26 AM

Oh, Great Gygax, who we implore to not let the Black Puddings get our Bags of Holding...

Did you ever run characters through the Vault of the Drow (D3), or is it only a 'literary' creation for the purposes of (nearly) concluding the Great Descent?

Cheers!

Larcen

Saturday, 7th September, 2002, 08:02 AM

Hi Gary,

Glad to see your still answering questions! Sorry about the long message to follow, but an opportunity to question you is too good to pass up!

After reading what you have said about Lejendary Journeys I was interested enough to go check out your website for more info.

First, let me say that the free download, "Weyland Smith & Company", was hilarious. Leave it to you to crank out 59 pages of pure magic and creativity. I especially liked how you included generic, non-specific "rules" right in the body of the funny descriptions for each item. Where do you get the ideas for such great magic items?

However, I was disappointed not to find more information on the LJ game itself, other than the sample Avatars. I was kind of hoping there would be a sort of free "LJ Lite" (a la "GURPS Lite" available at the Steve Jackson site), or an introduction to some of LJ's mechanics, or at least more information on how to read the sample Avatar sheets themselves. At lot of the abbreviations on the sheets were meaningless to me. Can you post a sort of key on how to read the Avatar sheets? I hope I simply didn't miss it somewhere.

On a different topic, here are a few off the wall questions:

What kind of music do you enjoy listening to, and do you use atmospheric music for any of your gaming sessions?

The anniversary of 9/11 is coming around so it's on my mind. Where were you, and what was your reaction, when you first heard of last year's tragedy?

On a lighter note, do you think Al Quaida would loosen up if they gamed more? ;)

Finally, there is a project I have been hoping someone would do for some time now, and quite frankly am surprised no one has thought of it yet. And now that I think of it, YOU are the only person I would trust to do it justice. :) Here is the idea: A sourcebook for ROLEplaying. No rules. Just roleplaying. In it, there would be complete descriptions of how each and every monster (in whatever game system suits your fancy) talks, acts, parlays, etc. Right down to common words used, voice inflections, and accents. Obviously no one race can be pigeonholed into one stereotype, so I am talking the common mannerisms of average members of each race. For example, unless you read this new book, you would never know that kobolds speak in quick high-pitched voices and repeat themselves over and over again. Or you would not know about the fact that hobgoblins talk in slurred, almost drunken voices and have a habit of belching midsentence and using the word "Dunno" a lot. Hobgoblins also tend to slouch and hunch their shoulders and move their heads back and forth a lot. See what I mean? I am talking hard, fast stuff that the game master can use AT THE GAMING TABLE to make his roleplaying come to life. I think this would be extremely helpful to would be aspiring game masters everywhere, like me! What do you think of this idea?

Anyway, thanks for giving me, my friends, and gamers everywhere a wonderful passtime and hobby like no other.

Eternalknight

Saturday, 7th September, 2002, 01:00 PM

Hey Gary, another question for you.

What do you think of the future of paper based gaming? Where do you see RPG's being in 5, 10 or 50 years? Also, do you ever think we will see a computer game that represents D&D to the full extent? Neverwinter Nights was close, but not quite 100%.

Speaking of computer games, have you played any of the old D&D computer games, such as pool of Radiance and Curse of the Azure Bonds? If so, what did you think of them?

Col_Pladoh

Saturday, 7th September, 2002, 04:00 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by davidschwartznz

From your perspective, what makes 3E a different game from AD&D? Is it just the 'd20 system' or are there other elements?

You've suggested that d20 is rules heavy (perhaps it is). But do you think it's more complicated than 2E?

My perspective aside, try playing an AD&D character using 3E rules. All manner of differences, right? The mnechanics and rules of new D&D are radically different from some of their counterparts in AD&D.

"Rules-heavy" means that there are definate mechanics prescribed tor handling virtually all situations and cases thereof likely to arise in game play. 3E is very much that way, and it is carefully designed so that each part of the game is linked to the others, a tight, regulated whole.

Yes indeeds, I know that 3E is more complicated that AD&D--I never played 2E, although I did play some OAD&D where parts of the 2E system were picked up and included.

Gary

ColonelHardisson

Saturday, 7th September, 2002, 04:06 PM

Aww, jeez, Gary - I asked the same kind of questions back earlier on the thread, and you yelled at me (well, sorta)!

;)

Col_Pladoh

Saturday, 7th September, 2002, 04:06 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by MerricB

Oh, Great Gygax, who we implore to not let the Black Puddings get our Bags of Holding...

Now there's a thought dear to my DMly heart! Dave Arneson conceived the black pudding, and I confess it is one of my favorite critters for disconcerting PCs... :D

Quote:

Did you ever run characters through the Vault of the Drow (D3), or is it only a 'literary' creation for the purposes of (nearly) concluding the Great Descent?

Cheers!

I never ran any of my PCs through the Vault, but I did DM my personal group, and several play-test groups through the setting, and then DMed with a team of others that module as a tournament at one of the small cons TSR used to hold in Lake Geneva in the Legion Hall here. :eek:

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Saturday, 7th September, 2002, 04:38 PM

It is dawning on me that I could well spend my declining years pleasantly engaged in answering posts here...

:D

Okay, back to the task at hand:

Quote:

Originally posted by Larcen

Hi Gary,

Glad to see your still answering questions! Sorry about the long message to follow, but an opportunity to question you is too good to pass up!

After reading what you have said about Lejendary Journeys I was interested enough to go check out your website for more info.

First, let me say that the free download, "Weyland Smith & Company", was hilarious. Leave it to you to crank out 59 pages of pure magic and creativity. I especially liked how you included generic, non-specific "rules" right in the body of the funny descriptions for each item. Where do you get the ideas for such great magic items?

Heh, and that is also little booklet is available from Hekaforge so the GM can have it on hand when he wants to mess with the players :eek:

Of course as a typical boy I used to get "joke and novelty catalogs in the mail--I'd send a dime to get them, in fact, espcially the one from Johnson Smith & Company. Then I'd carefully read them, long for the many marvelous things therein, from snapping gum packs to cigarette loads, even fencing foils. Yes, I did save up and buy "stuff" too. Luckily I was out of the house when my father's after-dinner cigar when KAPOW!

Anyway, remembering fondly those days, I decided to do something like that for RPGs. Eventually I'll expand the work and add it to the "Gygaxian" Fantasy Worlds reference line, perhaps.

Quote:

However, I was disappointed not to find more information on the LJ game itself, other than the sample Avatars. I was kind of hoping there would be a sort of free "LJ Lite" (a la "GURPS Lite" available at the Steve Jackson site), or an introduction to some of LJ's mechanics, or at least more information on how to read the sample Avatar sheets themselves. At lot of the abbreviations on the sheets were meaningless to me. Can you post a sort of key on how to read the Avatar sheets? I hope I simply didn't miss it somewhere.

Heh, and that's LEJENDARY ADVENTURES, amigo:) The website that has virtually all there is on the game system is www.lejendary.com Hekaforge does plan to do a primer for the game, a small book with a low proce point, so that those interested but not sure, can have a go without spending \$30 or more to see if it is their cup of tea.

There is a brief glossary of terms in the players' rules book, and I'll suggest to Gambit that this be posted on his website...

(Just did that via eamil, so onwards and upwards.)

Quote:

On a different topic, here are a few off the wall questions:

What kind of music do you enjoy listening to, and do you use atmospheric music for any of your gaming sessions?

When I am really engrossed in work I prefer silence, and if there is some background noise and confusion, then classical or Spanish guitar music to muffle the intrusive noise. In general I enjoy classical and Spanish music, blues, modern jazz, old R&B, some electronic classical compositions, even some opera. Music with lyrics I generally find distracting, as I want to listen to them, not concentrate on my work.

When we game I don't play music, as I find it interferes with the conversation and roleplay.

Quote:

The anniversary of 9/11 is coming around so it's on my mind. Where were you, and what was your reaction, when you first heard of last year's tragedy?

I was at the computer, and Gail happened to be taking a break, drinking coffee and watching FOX News. She called me in to see what was happening, so I saw the coverage of the second plane hitting. I immediately assumed it was a deliberate attack when I saw that horrific scene. Unbelievable, heart-breaking, and absolutely infuriating!

Quote:

On a lighter note, do you think Al Quaida would loosen up if they gamed more? ;)

I've got a game for them...

Quote:

Finally, there is a project I have been hoping someone would do for some time now, and quite frankly am surprised no one has thought of it yet. And now that I think of it, YOU are the only person I would trust to do it justice. :) Here is the idea: A sourcebook for ROLEplaying. No rules. Just roleplaying. In it, there would be complete descriptions of how each and every monster (in whatever game system suits your fancy) talks, acts, parlays, etc. Right down to common words used, voice inflections, and accents. Obviously no one race can be pigeonholed into one stereotype, so I am talking the common mannerisms of average members of each race. For example, unless you read this new book, you would never know that kobolds speak in quick high-pitched voices and repeat themselves over and over again. Or you would not know about the fact that hobgoblins talk in slurred, almost drunken voices and have a habit of belching midsentence and using the word "Dunno" a lot. Hobgoblins also tend to slouch and hunch their shoulders and move their heads back and forth a lot. See what I mean? I am talking hard, fast stuff that the game master can use AT THE GAMING TABLE to make his roleplaying come to life. I think this would be extremely helpful to would be aspiring game masters everywhere, like me! What do you think of this idea?

Anyway, thanks for giving me, my friends, and gamers everywhere a wonderful passtime and hobby like no other.

The work you suggest would likely be helpful to many a gamer, GMs and players alike. However, I wonder who could possibly manage the task? To write such a book would require a couple of years time, I should think. Also, to be generally universal to FRPGs, a lot of publishers would have to give premission for use of their proprietary creatures, I should think. The upshot is I really like your idea, but I am doubtful that it can be done. It's surely too much work for me to undertake....without a government grant, that is :rolleyes:

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Saturday, 7th September, 2002, 04:48 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Eternalknight
Hey Gary, another question for you.*

What do you think of the future of paper based gaming? Where do you see RPG's being in 5, 10 or 50 years? Also, do you ever think we will see a computer game that represents D&D to the full extent? Neverwinter Nights was close, but not quite 100%.

Speaking of computer games, have you played any of the old D&D computer games, such as pool of Radiance and Curse of the Azure Bonds? If so, what did you think of them?

Happy to oblige!

I am relatively certain that face-to-face RPGing is here to stay, much as live theater has survived a couple of millenia, remains still in the face of motion pictures and television. Of course the relative percentage of people playing P&P games thus will decline as technology improves and the online and computer RPGs come ever closer to the playing live with a group of friends. Short of the Starship Enterprise's holodeck, though, electronic RPGs will never be as good as the f-t-f experience.

I don't play electronic games much. If I get started I blow a week or a month doing nothing but playing compulsively. I love such games, of course, and as W.C. Fields used to say about his gin, "Like blood to a vampire...yes..." Even a text-based game is compelling to me. If all people were like I am, the electronic gaming market would be larger still, and now it is bigger than motion pictures.

As I've said before, I can hardly wait until my "work" demands I be involved in the alpha and beta testing of the LA MMOROPG ;) If and when I "retire" I plan to spend at least 30 hours a week playing games, not 60 hours working on them.

Cheerio,
Gary

Col_Pladoh

Saturday, 7th September, 2002, 04:57 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by ColonelHardisson

Aww, jeez, Gary - I asked the same kind of questions back earlier on the thread, and you yelled at me (well, sorta)!

;)

Awww...

I only used gentle admonishment when you asked the same thing in a different way, eh?

Note how I answered the question in question :eek:

Golly, if folks are really interested in my opinion of games, maybe they'll take my advice and switch en masse to the LA RPG as their main one... Being a gamer born and bred, I'd venerate so much as hint at exclusivity, because I know damned well I like to try different RPGs and other games pretty regularly!

Heh-heh-heh,
Gary

Noj

Saturday, 7th September, 2002, 08:14 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Col_Pladoh

Appreciate the interest. The HALL' is meant for experienced players, for there will be diverse approaches needed to manage the dozens of scenarios to be managed therein. I have used the LA game system to create it, so it's a bit difficult to estimate the PC level as it now stands--Jon Creffield is adding the D20 material now. I should think average level 8-10 for, but the DM could easily upgrade the encounters by including more opponents, or giving them more HD and damage potential, so as to handle PCs of 12-14 levels. Of course some places in the adventure level 20-30 PCs will be lost unless they are played properly, thinking is used rather than reliance on combat and magic.

**Ciao,
Gary**

Hi all :o)

Hope you don't mind me sticking my oar in here :eek:

HOMP is a truly excellent adventure full of surprises and very inventive. While I've been doing the d20 work one of the problems I've had is determining the PC levels likely to be challenged by each of the many pane-portals through which the adventuring team will pass.

If the Game Master wants to give the party a free hand when selecting which pane they will use then the team had best be on the large side and consist of adventurers of levels 9-11. If the GM carefully reviews each pane and then initially allows access only to those suitable for his players' characters then the band might begin play at level 8+

As Gary notes some panes will provide a challenge to parties of <i>any</i> level. With just a little work on the GM's part characters of 14th level could adventure in the Hall.

Cheerio!
Jon

Larcen

Sunday, 8th September, 2002, 01:21 AM

Quote:

Originally posted by Col_Pladoh

... The upshot is I really like your idea, but I am doubtful that it can be done. ...

Gary

Oh well. At the very least maybe my idea, and your approval of it, will inspire authors who write future monster stats to have a "Roleplaying Tips" section right below the usual stuff. I mean, come on WOTC, how hard would this have been to include at the end of every intelligent creature in the MM? (Gary, start a trend and put something like this in all YOUR future works, I implore you! Show 'em all what ROLEPLAYING truly means. :))

Col_Pladoh

Sunday, 8th September, 2002, 04:02 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Larcen

... (Gary, start a trend and put something like this in all YOUR future works, I implore you! Show 'em all what ROLEPLAYING truly means. :))

That is indeed something that all writers might well heed. Some minor information is given here and there by me, but I have neglected giving

intelligence for roleplaying races and creatures that are intelligent. Doing that for new ones won't be hard. Going back through all the current material for the LA game system and adding it will be demanding, but I think it would be worthwhile. Having that might mean a lot more interesting gaming :eek:

Cheers,
Gary

MerricB

Monday, 9th September, 2002, 12:52 AM

O Mighty Gygax, who we implore not to sentence us to eternity in Rob Kuntz's "El Raja Key"...

Would it be fair to say that a role-playing game (or indeed, any game) in your hands is never a "finished product" - that you're always tinkering with the rules, to make it suit your needs better?

;)

Cheers!

ColonelHardisson

Monday, 9th September, 2002, 01:09 AM

Gary, I was thinking about your comments regarding the use of archetypes in RPGs, D&D specifically, and I think I see what you mean. However, let me present a thought upon which I'd like to see you comment. Please note that I'm not talking about anything to do with quality or how it relates to AD&D 1st edition, and D&D 3rd edition.

I think you're right about 3e being a new game. I also agree that it has moved away from archetypes in its basic form. However, it has struck me that the archetypes will or will not be imposed upon the characters, depending on the players involved. That is, someone like me, a player from way back, will be inclined to impose the archetypes upon the game when playing 3e (almost without thinking about it), while someone who began playing RPGs more recently will be more likely to dispense with archetypes, or use them in a different way than D&D, in any edition previous, has used them. EDIT: Again, I just want to emphasize this isn't an analysis of relative quality or lack thereof.

In essence, what I'm saying is that 3e can be played using those archetypes that were a main part of 1e. I also, see, though, that the use of these archetypes are not as strongly reinforced or encouraged in 3e. So, younger players will not be familiar with those archetypes, and will be less likely to use them (assuming they become familiar with them through some other medium, like reading fantasy fiction).

What do you think about this? I'm not saying one is superior to another, or anything like that. I'm simply presenting this thesis on game theory for the sake of discussion. I also like the thought of coming up with a conversion document for 3e that can be used to evoke the "feel" of 1e (as Necromancer Games might say). That is, using 3e to play a 1e-type game, for those who like the basic game mechanics of 3e, but also like the mood and feel of 1e. Any thoughts or suggestions? EDIT: Basically, what mechanics, concepts, and archetypes of 1e AD&D do you feel are the foundation of that game?

I realize this may be too much analysis of RPG theory, but heck, it struck me as interesting when it all occurred to me.

MerricB

Monday, 9th September, 2002, 01:21 AM

Just as an aside, ColonelHardisson:

I've been slowly tinkering with the 3E rules to give more of a 1E feel; the big change should be the rate XP is given out at - I suggest:

Levels 1-3: normal
Levels 4-6: three-quarters
Levels 7-9: one-half
Levels 10+: one-third
(optionally, Levels 13+: one-quarter).

You can prevent characters from multiclassing EXCEPT as legal demi-human choices per 1E. I don't personally do so, because my players don't abuse the system, IMO.

Keep a tight rein on Prestige Classes! :)

Cheers!

Nathal

Monday, 9th September, 2002, 02:35 AM

These were my house rules on the archetypes and multi-classing.

Classes that subsume background or extensive training and cannot be multiclassed into, with few exceptions.

Restricted

Barbarian (no exceptions)

Druid (except nature clerics or rangers)

Paladin (except lawful good clerics or fighters chosen by the gods)

Ranger (except elves, druids, nature clerics or Fighters with Wilderness Lore of +4 or better)

Sorcerer (except with new Feat: Sorcerer's Blood, allowing a character to multi-class into sorcerer and use magic items as if he had access to the sorcerer spell list.)

Apprenticeship (PC) or Schooling (NPC) Required

Bard: Perform +2; Spellcraft +2

Cleric: Knowledge of Religion and Arcana at +2 and must be accepted by the god/goddess

Monk: Concentration +2 and Knowledge of Arcana at +2

Wizard: Alchemy +2, Spellcraft +2

Schooling is 1 week per 2 levels + 1000 in gold per week. A haggling roll of Charisma opposing the instructor's intelligence can result in the price staying the same or lowering. For each point succeeding above the instructors roll, lower cost by 100 gold (minimum 100 gp a week). Base time requirement is same for PC instruction, but PC becomes "apprentice level" first if taught by a PC while adventuring (see DMG).

Non-Restricted

Fighter : must be proficient in at least one martial weapon (feat required for those classes lacking access to martial weapons).
Apprentice level is mandatory if multiclassed into fighter lacking any martial weapon ability.

Rogue: Must have 4 Rogue class skills at +1 or better to qualify.

Q&A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Page 10 of 36 First 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 ... Last

Col_Pladoh

Monday, 9th September, 2002, 01:49 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by MerricB****O Mighty Gygax, who we implore not to sentence us to eternity in Rob Kuntz's "El Raja Key"...***

Right! Perhaps the Isle of the Ape is more fitting...

Quote:

Would it be fair to say that a role-playing game (or indeed, any game) in your hands is never a "finished product" - that you're always tinkering with the rules, to make it suit your needs better?

;)

Cheers!

Yes, that characterization is fairly apt. However, it needs to be modified by the inclusion of additions and changes instigated by dedicated players; so the "your" in "your needs" might better read "the needs of the game in the eyes of the participants."

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Monday, 9th September, 2002, 01:56 PM

To get to what I believe is the essence of the matter, as you state yourself, I've snipped all but one paragraph, Colonel ;)

Quote:

*Originally posted by ColonelHardisson****In essence, what I'm saying is that 3e can be played using those archetypes that were a main part of 1e. I also, see, though, that the use of these archetypes are not as strongly reinforced or encouraged in 3e. So, younger players will not be familiar with those archetypes, and will be less likely to use them (assuming they become familiar with them through some other medium, like reading fantasy fiction).***

That is so. Indeed, much of 3E can be played differently than what the core rules focus on. As you note, participants new to D&D will not likely do that for lack of familiarity. However, even the veteran DM will have some difficulty sticking to archetypes if the players are desirous of not so doing. They are no longer a game base, an integral part of the system.

Ciao,
Gary

Col_Pladoh

Monday, 9th September, 2002, 02:00 PM

The strictures noted above are, IMO, valiant attempts to prevent blatant power gaming. However, the actual game assumes something quite different, and that means there exists in the system mechanics that mitigate against long-term campaign play.

Gary

Larcen

Monday, 9th September, 2002, 03:42 PM

Gary, here is a quickie:

Why "Col_Pladoh" ?

Col_Pladoh

Monday, 9th September, 2002, 03:56 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Larcen****Gary, here is a quickie:******Why "Col_Pladoh" ?***

A fair enough question, Larcen ;)

I am usually not given to using some nickname, but as it is de rigeur on many websites I pondered a bit and came up with "Col_Pladoh" for the following reasons:

I liked to play colonel Mustard as a boy when CLUE was a regular game in my group of comrades.

I am a member of the OH of Kentucky Colonels.

I have sometimes been spoken of in terms similar to those used for the great Greek philosophers.

So...

...to poke fun at all, and mainly myself, I decided that "Col_Pladoh" was an appropriate name to use :eek:

Who can take me, and the whole subject of RPGs, too seriously when seeing that nic?

Cheerio,
Gary

Geoffrey

Monday, 9th September, 2002, 05:50 PM

Gary, in the original 1974 D&D rules, does every monster get only one attack per round, and is the damage always 1-6? (With the clearly stated exceptions, of course, of giants and ogres) I'm mostly wondering about dragons and other fearsome creatures. Do they really deal out only as much melee damage as an orc with a sword?

Second question: Which of your FRPGs (D&D, AD&D, DJ: Mythus, and LA) cost you the most in terms of sweat? I would guess DJ, since it is obviously the result of a mountain of research.

Col_Pladoh

Monday, 9th September, 2002, 06:38 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Geoffrey

Gary, in the original 1974 D&D rules, does every monster get only one attack per round, and is the damage always 1-6? (With the clearly stated exceptions, of course, of giants and ogres) I'm mostly wondering about dragons and other fearsome creatures. Do they really deal out only as much melee damage as an orc with a sword?

Yes, but don't forget that most of the fearsome creatures concerned had as principal attack forms something other than melee sort--breath weapon, missile, draining touch, etc.

In truth, a man or orc with a sword is pretty deadly, that such an attack might well cut someone in half, deal deadly harm--albeit not usually in terms of the D&D game, granted :eek:

Quote:

Second question: Which of your FRPGs (D&D, AD&D, DJ: Mythus, and LA) cost you the most in terms of sweat? I would guess DJ, since it is obviously the result of a mountain of research.

That's difficult to answer in logical manner, as you must remember that when I wrote D&D, there existed a huge base of knowledge garnered from reading authored fantasy, myth and legend, history too. Also that I had the CHAINMAIL game to work from, but that itself took time and effort, play testing to develop. That said, the sheer blocks of time needed to write the AD&D and DJ/MYTHUS games were about the same, but the added research needed for the latter did amount to a lot of time. Finally, LA was based on my entire experience in RPGs, and designing for computer applications--a couple of years spent thus.

I do believe I spent the most pure research time on the MYTHUS material, and that AD&D and the LA game are the systems I have spent the most writing time on :D

Hope that suffices,
Gary

Henry

Monday, 9th September, 2002, 09:26 PM

One more question, Gary, if you will:

I purchased from you back in 1999 the Legendary Rules limited edition that came out at Gencon. Compared to the regular rules, are there many changes between the two? If so, is there a "conversion document" available with said changes (either on hekaforge site or elsewhere)?

andargor

Monday, 9th September, 2002, 09:57 PM

Hello Gary,

I was just browsing the forums, and spotted this thread. Thanks for stopping by!

Just to echo some thoughts expressed earlier...

I started gaming in 1977 with the Blue Book (I was 10, damn those dice would wear out fast). BTW, who were the characters on the cover? (I dimly remember an archer and a mage, and the red dragon of course, we still have the book somewhere...)

D&D has definitely changed my life. Asked to explain what it was, I usually said something like "a mix of theater, improv and imagination". I truly do believe that children playing an RPG will develop superior creativity and social skills. I'm a computer engineer currently, but I've always kept that intuitive/creative side and person skills, and I thank RPGs for that.

The other major impact the game has had is that I'm still in touch with the original group after 25 years. After career moves, families, etc, we still manage to play every two weeks.

Some of us are in different cities. No problem, we hook up the webcam and fire up NetMeeting. Some people will balk at this, but when you play with people that have 25 years of experience, you really feel as if they're right next to you.

We're playing 3E now, and yes we use archetypes. Although I did see some signs of corruption... Mage such and such takes a level of fighter to boost his hp or get a feat...

But generally, even if you are the min/maxer type (which didn't exist in OD&D), sticking with an archetype usually yields to a better character. The rules appear to promote power via multi-classing, but my experience has not shown this. I usually play the "pure" fighter or mage, and funnily enough, I end up saving the party more times than not... Specialists will always beat generalists in their specialty (if that makes sense) :cool:

I do agree that the current rules do not guide new players towards good role playing. After all, when you use archetypes, you worry less about mechanics, and more about how you are going to play. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I felt that the D&D Basic Set vs AD&D tried to provide simpler rules for beginners so they learn what role playing is about before moving on to a more complex system? If so, it should become so again...

Anyway, sorry for the pell mell comments and questions. It's just nice to have you here. Brings back memories of the old Dragon magazine, the other RPGs I used to play (Gamma World, Cthulu, Boot Hill) and even my first wargames (Blitzkrieg, Tobruk, Panzer Leader, original Squad Leader). :cool:

Keep up the good work, and if you need testers for your MMPOROPG (whatever that is LOL) or any GreyHawk stuff (we played that setting for a few years), just give a shout!

Andargor

Col_Pladoh

Monday, 9th September, 2002, 11:04 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Henry

One more question, Gary, if you will:

I purchased from you back in 1999 the Legendary Rules limited edition that came out at Gencon. Compared to the regular rules, are there many changes between the two? If so, is there a "conversion document" available with said changes (either on hekaforge site or elsewhere)?

What? You plan on playing the game with a collector's edition book? Gasp!

Yes, there are any number of typos cleaned up, corrections, and even a few additions made to the LEJENDARY RULES FOR ALL PLAYERS book in standard edition, second printing. These, and all sorts of "official" additional material can be found posted for download at:

www.lejendary.com

A link from there will take you to a UK website that has even more such material available. Sorry, but I can't recall the URL.

As someone noted here, I do tend to create a bit of new work, and as usual with dedicated gamers, the LA crowd is likewise pretty creative too...

Cheerio,
Gary

Col_Pladoh

Monday, 9th September, 2002, 11:23 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by andargor

Hello Gary,

I was just browsing the forums, and spotted this thread. Thanks for stopping by!

Just to echo some thoughts expressed earlier...

I started gaming in 1977 with the Blue Book (I was 10, damn those dice would wear out fast). BTW, who were the characters on the cover? (I dimly remember an archer and a mage, and the red dragon of course, we still have the book somewhere...)

Happy to read your post and appreciate what you have to pass along.

The characters on the D&D Basic Set cover were, as far as I know, simply creations of the artist, Dave Sutherland.

Quote:

D&D has definitely changed my life. Asked to explain what it was, I usually said something like "a mix of theater, improv and imagination". I truly do believe that children playing an RPG will develop superior creativity and social skills. I'm a computer engineer

currently, but I've always kept that intuitive/creative side and person skills, and I thank RPGs for that.

The other major impact the game has had is that I'm still in touch with the original group after 25 years. After career moves, families, etc, we still manage to play every two weeks.

Some of us are in different cities. No problem, we hook up the webcam and fire up NetMeeting. Some people will balk at this, but when you play with people that have 25 years of experience, you really feel as if they're right next to you.

Yes, what you note above is often mentioned to me in emails from various gamers. Not a few state exactly how playing A/D&D improved their social or scholastic skills, and virtually all note the lasting friendships that were made through gaming.

As for online play, it seems a natural recourse when a group of old friends becomes separated. With audio and video components, the NetMeeting becomes very close to the face-to-face experience when all were in the same room, eh?

Quote:

We're playing 3E now, and yes we use archetypes. Although I did see some signs of corruption... Mage such and such takes a level of fighter to boost his hp or get a feat...

But generally, even if you are the min/maxer type (which didn't exist in OD&D), sticking with an archetype usually yields to a better character. The rules appear to promote power via multi-classing, but my experience has not shown this. I usually play the "pure" fighter or mage, and funnily enough, I end up saving the party more times than not... Specialists will always beat generalists in their specialty (if that makes sense) :cool:

In general I concur, but again you are making reference to a group of veterans, not newbies...

Quote:

I do agree that the current rules do not guide new players towards good role playing. After all, when you use archetypes, you worry less about mechanics, and more about how you are going to play. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I felt that the D&D Basic Set vs AD&D tried to provide simpler rules for beginners so they learn what role playing is about before moving on to a more complex system? If so, it should become so again...

Yes, there should be a lot more emphasis on roleplay, what it is to create a character and stay within the framework created, and what it means to the game overall when this is done. This is not to say I am disparaging combat, as it is a very important, integral, part of the RPG form.

Quote:

Anyway, sorry for the pell mell comments and questions. It's just nice to have you here. Brings back memories of the old Dragon magazine, the other RPGs I used to play (Gamma World, Cthulu, Boot Hill) and even my first wargames (Blitzkrieg, Tobruk, Panzer Leader, original Squad Leader). :cool:

Heh, and I do have a little column that runs most months in DRAGON--just sent off a couple of installments this week, in fact.

As for GAMMA WORLD, don't overlook Jim Ward's METAMORPHOSIS ALPHA game from Fast Forward. I always preferred it to the later version, GW, in which input from Kevin Blumne seemed to mess up a perfectly good system...

Quote:

Keep up the good work, and if you need testers for your MMPORPG (whatever that is LOL) or any GreyHawk stuff (we played that setting for a few years), just give a shout!
Andargor

The Massively Multi-player Persistent Online RPG version of the LA game should go into alpha test late next year. But then I'm sure you'll be familiar with the LEJENDARY ADVENTURE game, so getting into the beta test lineup will likely be easy :eek:

Cheers,
Gary

MerricB

Tuesday, 10th September, 2002, 02:05 PM

O Great Gyax, who we implore not to let the earseekers infest our helmets - or our ears...

Stepping back to the not-quite-elder days of D&D, how do you see the relationship between AD&D (1E) and the Basic/Expert/Companion/Master sets of "basic" D&D?

Did you ever play or DM the BECM version? (especially at the higher levels?)

Many thanks for the time you've spent answering our queries! :)

Cheers!

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 10th September, 2002, 02:58 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by MerricB

O Great Gyax, who we implore not to let the earseekers infest our helmets - or our ears...

Until the wretches conceived of ear trumpets, those marvelous little grubs surely did stop all that vile listening with ears pressed to doors so as to avoid nasty surprises the DMs wished to spring on the PCs.

Quote:

Stepping back to the not-quite-elder days of D&D, how do you see the relationship between AD&D (1E) and the Basic/Expert/Companion/Master sets of "basic" D&D?

Did you ever play or DM the BECM version? (especially at the higher levels?)

Many thanks for the time you've spent answering our queries! :)

Cheers!

Because I was so involved in getting the AD&D line up and running, I did not play the D&D "B-E-C-M" other than in tests of Frank Mentzer's (able) work there. It was only after I did not need to be concerned about the direction of AD&D that I had time to revisit D&D as DM. It is a great game, IMO, and no question I still enjoy running adventures using the system.

AS for answering questions here, rest assured it is my pleasure:)

Gary

Larcen

Tuesday, 10th September, 2002, 03:44 PM

Hi Gary, me again. Glad to see you still around. :)

If you have the time, can you describe a typical encounter between an average fighter-type and average monster-type in your LA game? I am looking to see what the rolls made are from beginning to end and also try and get a general feel for the flow of LA combat.

Heck, if you like, spice it up with a little magic too!

ColonelHardisson

Tuesday, 10th September, 2002, 03:45 PM

Gary, where does one buy Legendary Adventures? I looked at www.gygax.com, but I guess I'm not much of a sleuth; I couldn't find it. EDIT: And by "it," I mean an online store.

Henry

Tuesday, 10th September, 2002, 04:19 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Larcen

Hi Gary, me again. Glad to see you still around. :)

If you have the time, can you describe a typical encounter between an average fighter-type and average monster-type in your LA game?

I second this question. An example of play of the LA game would be extraordinarily helpful to me as well. Is there an example of such perhaps in the rule book, or perhaps available online?

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 10th September, 2002, 06:25 PM

Howdy!

Here's a general response to LArcen, ColonelHardisson, and Henry.

The main online shop handling the LA game line is found on a link at www.legendar.com --I use that as the URL because it's the place where you can get just about anything you are interested in regarding the game :D

Now for a combat example... Wait! The LA game system is not one that stresses combat. It facilitates all forms of activity. Ah well, okay, back to the H&S then.

Let's assume that a party of adventurers is entering the ruins of a temple hidden in the thick foliage of a tropical jungle. There is a Forester Order Avatar leading the way, a Noble Order one directly behind him, and a Mage Order Avatar is bringing up the rear. (Note, for this example I am using "ordered avatars," so we'll have archetypes in play.)

Combat is handled in 3-second-long "ABCs."

As the Forester pauses to use his Hunt Ability to check for any signs in the entry to the temple, he is grabbed from above by a massive gorilla-like creature, a kru-krad. This alerts the two others, but it doesn't help the victim. The kru-krad (Health 65, Precision 60, and Speed 17) smashes the Forester (9-12 +10--that 10 bypassing armor), then bites him (13-16 +6 Harm), and hurls him down to the stone floor. As the LM I rule that the Forester must make an Avoidance Roll against his Speed Base Rating or else be stunned for 3-6 ABCs from the impact. Assuming an average unadjusted Speed, this gives a 13% chance. The Forester is lucky and makes the roll. He has suffered 26 points of Harm, so he's at half normal Health now but ready to fight back.

As the krukrad is attacking the first of the party to enter, the Noble and the Mage see what's happening and move into action:

The Noble is unable to attack immediately, as the ape-creature is in the beams overhead, but his sword is at the ready.

The Mage reacts immediately, using a Flame Fan Power to inflict 9-12 Harm on the creature as it drops the Forester. The activation of this Power takes 2 seconds, so at the start of the second ABC of the encounter, the mage checks against his Enchantment Ability score of 64, succeeds, and so the kru-krad is subjected to the flame, and it's coat of hair is on fire, so an additional 3-5 points will accrue next ABC.

Meantime the Forester is up, readying his crossbow, while the Noble hefts his sword.

The enraged kru-krad leaps down on the Noble. The LM rules that this attack will certainly overbear the Noble, but as his sword is ready, he will have opportunity for first attack. The Noble has a Weapons Ability of 52, with his sword adding 10, and Chivalry another 10, so his likelihood of success is 72%, he makes that. Harm is 4-20 base for the sword he has, and to that is added Chivalry and Physique bonuses--10 and 4, the total then adjusted downwards by the kru-krad's natural armor of 6. Let's assume that the noble manages to inflict 20 total Harm on the ape. So it is at the end of the ABC down from H 65 by 14 from the fire and 20 from the sword, so it is at 31 Health.

It's attack chance is 60 (ots P Base Rating), plus the LM gives it +10 for its leaping assault, and it lands squarely on the Noble. Both of it's attacks succeed, but the shield and armor worn by the Noble mean that only the +10 bonus from the smash accrue to that character. However, the kru-krad's impact inflicts also d10 Harm on the victim, this also ignoring shield and armor protection. The roll is a 10, so the Noble is down 20 Health, pinned, and unable to attack. The kru-krad will ignore shield protection in subsequent attacks, so the Noble is in trouble!

In the third ABC of action, the Mage attempts to activate a new Power, Xargya's Military Fork (essentially a to paralyze the ape for a few seconds), but he misses his Ability check, the Power fails, and his Activation Energy Points are lost.

The kru-krad is acting first, and its beating and biting upon the Noble score fully 20 more Harm to that worthy's Health. He is at 20 points now, will be unconscious next ABC from another 20 Harm, virtually dead if more that that is inflicted on him.

Fortunately, the Forester has taken aim, and with a 15 bonus with the crossbow to his Weapons-Archery Ability at close range, he hits easily. The base Harm range is 3-20, adding 4 for his Archery ability. His Ability check score is 01, a special success that means maximum Harm base 20 is scored, that bypassing opponent protection. A confirming check for possible added Harm is made. It is a 20, and that means added Harm is done. A d10 comes up 7, so the kru-krad suffers $20 + 4 + 7 = 31$. Just enough to send the creature into unconsciousness. The Forester drops his crossbow, draws his dagger, and ends the monstrous creature's life, then pulls his comrade out from under its dead body.

Total time of combat has been 12 seconds. Two of the Avatars will now be seeking some healing, especially the usually unscathed Noble, for in this case his full plate armor and shield did not serve as they do in most cases.

The LM is wondering if any of them spot the giant cobra that is slithering near...

:eek:

Gary

Henry

Tuesday, 10th September, 2002, 07:09 PM

Fascinating. I shall have to look for this further...

I noticed a few circumstances which added or took away a +10 or -10 from the percentile chance - roughly analogous to the +2 and -2 circumstances in the d20 system...

One thing that confused me, and I will really need to pop up around the Legendary Boards for more info - but I noticed that some Avatars get certain abilities, at a percentage of their health, or precision, or speed, or such. Do other Avatars get any "default skills" for some things? For example, say an avatar with no skill at all in hiding wants to "get off the road," to paraphrase Elijah Wood. What would his chance be at this?

Larcen

Tuesday, 10th September, 2002, 08:40 PM

Thanks for the example. Sounds faster than 3E alright! But I happen to LIKE discussing rules and have been called a rules lawyer more than once, so I hope you don't mind being dragged into an in-depth analysis here. :eek: I know, I know, sorry. Anyway, being as I am, several questions popped into my head after reading the example:

- 1) What roll was made, if any, for the kru-krad to successfully grab the forester? It was not mentioned, so was it automatic?
- 2) It appears like a person's chance of successfully striking an opponent is not dependant on any kind defense value the target may have and that only the attacker's skills, bonuses and weapon play a part. What is the rationale for this?
- 3) Along the same lines, is the Mage's chance of successfully activating a Power dependant solely on his Enchantment skill and not the magnitude (level?) of the Power he is attempting?
- 4) Some of the die ranges seem strange to me. How is "3-20" or "4-20" rolled?
- 5) I am still getting used to going from a combat round of 1 minute (1E) to 6 seconds (3E). Feels too constrictive somehow. No way I can ever play GURPS, their round is 1 second I believe! Have your players had any problems with a mere 3 seconds per ABC? Something along the lines of: Avatar: "Ok, I take my backpack off, find that potion, and drink it." LM: "No way you can do all that in 3 seconds." Would this action just carry over into more than one ABC then?
- 6) Any particular reason why common RPG terminology was changed, like "rounds" to "ABCs" and "damage" to "Harm"? Was this just for flavor? (Not that after gaining familiarity it wouldn't become second nature I am sure.)

There may be more questions if I go back and read the example in more depth, but I know that one of LA's promoted strengths is that it's rules light, so I can understand if the answer to any and all of the above is something along those lines. Also, like I said earlier, if this is not the proper forum (literally) for all this, and you would prefer discussing it elsewhere (if at all) let me know. I would also accept it if your answer to it all was simply: "Buy the rulebook!" ;)

optimizer

Tuesday, 10th September, 2002, 08:47 PM

Howdy!

Quote:

Originally posted by Col_Pladoh

After the split with TSR, I returned to my original concept, painted over a globe of the earth to match my original ideas for a fantasy alternate earth, and thus Aerth was born. My wife and some others thought I'd lost it when they saw me with acrylics and brushes altering the globe:) I still have it around somewhere...

Only after I had the fully done globe of Aerth did I then set about the research needed to quantify all that was thereon.

I just wanted to say that this was a nice story on how you created a world. Any chance you will include this tale in your World Builder's Guide?

Thanks.

Mike

Q&A with Gary Gygax - Part I

Printable View

Show 20 post(s) from this thread on one page

Page 11 of 36 First ... 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 ... Last

optimizer

Tuesday, 10th September, 2002, 08:50 PM

Howdy!

Quote:

Originally posted by Col_Pladoh

Now for a cmbat example... Wait! The LA game system is not one that stresses combat. It facilitates all forms of activity. Ah well, okay, back to the H&S then.

Nice example. Any chance of posting a copy of it over at www.lejendary.com?

Thanks again!

Mike

optimizer

Tuesday, 10th September, 2002, 08:56 PM

Howdy!

Quote:

Originally posted by Larcen

4) Some of the die ranges seem strange to me. How is "3-20" or "4-20" rolled?

This reminds me of a thread at www.lejendary.com a year or so ago! :D

IIRC, the LA rules doesn't go into detail on which dice to roll in this case -- the assumption is that the players know how to convert a range into the mix of dice needed to generate the specified distribution.

Mike

Larcen

Tuesday, 10th September, 2002, 09:02 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by optimizer

Howdy!

This reminds me of a thread at www.lejendary.com a year or so ago! :D

IIRC, the LA rules doesn't go into detail on which dice to roll in this case -- the assumption is that the players know how to convert a range into the mix of dice needed to generate the specified distribution.

Mike

Ok, so 3-20 would be, say, 2d6 + 1d8 ? And 4-20 would be 2d6 + 2d4 ? That kind of thing?

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 10th September, 2002, 09:02 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Henry

Fascinating. I shall have to look for this further...

I noticed a few circumstances which added or took away a +10 or -10 from the percentile chance - roughly analogous to the +2 and -2 circumstances in the d20 system...

One thing that confused me, and I will really need to pop up around the Lejendary Boards for more info - but I noticed that some Avatars get certain abilities, at a percentage of their health, or precision, or speed, or such. Do other Avatars get any "default skills" for some things? For example, say an avatar with no skill at all in hiding wants to "get off the road," to paraphrase Elijah Wood. What would his chance be at this?

Right! The system uses percentile chances with adjustments that might range from 1 to 50 or more.

Assuming an Avatar was seeking to hide and didn't have any Ability that would facilitate this--Hunt, Ranging, Rustic, Waylaying--then it's up to the Lejend Master. Depending on the circumstances, I'd give a default of around 10 on the success, and that would be the penalty for any Avatar using a tracking skill to discover the matter.

Other things might have no default chance, or a mere 1% chance--a non-Extraordinary-Ability-possessing Avatar would likely have no chance for activating a Power (spell) from a Plaque (scroll), but in time one without Waterfaring Ability would likely be able to set a sail--a lot of d% checks beginning at 1 to see it if was right, adding 1 until a default of 10 was reached through trial and error. Enough of that, and the Avatar might eventually get the Ability at 1.

Possessing an Ability allows up to a +30 bonus for doing ordinary things in calm surroundings.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 10th September, 2002, 09:33 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Larcen

Thanks for the example. Sounds faster than 3E alright! But I happen to LIKE discussing rules and have been called a rules lawyer more than once, so I hope you don't mind being dragged into an in-depth analysis here. :eek: I know, I know, sorry. Anyway, being as I am, several questions popped into my head after reading the example:

1) What roll was made, if any, for the kru-krad to successfully grab the forester? It was not mentioned, so was it automatic?

Actually, I assumed an automatic hit for the kru-krad, as it was laying in wait, aware of the intruding party. In normal attack situations a creature has its Precision Base Rating as its d% chance for successful attack.

I am not a rules lawyer, and I don't mind bending or ignoring rules I have written...if that suits the game at the time :D

Quote:

2) If appears like a person's chance of successfully striking an opponent is not dependant on any kind defense value the target may have and that only the attacker's skills, bonuses and weapon play a part. What is the rationale for this?

Heh, well, maybe that armor doesn't really reduce the chance to be struck, but rather it absorbs damage (Harm in LA game terms) delivered by the attack. In the wash though, the effect of either system is much the same, so it's a mechanic, not a commentary on combat.

Quote:

3) Along the same lines, is the Mage's chance of successfully activating a Power dependant solely on his Enchantment skill and not the magnitude (level?) of the Power he is attempting?

Quite so, it is a function of Ability score, not of the power of the activation. However, the more potent Powers, Spells, etc. have longer activation times and a greater Activation Energy CPoint cost. Thus, players soon learn that the low-Rank, fast-to-activate Powers are their best stock in trade when a fight is in progress.

Quote:

4) Some of the die ranges seem strange to me. How is "3-20" or "4-20" rolled?

Oh, I just knew I should have explained that. The assumption of the game is that 20 is the standard Health of a human, and that most weapons can deliver 20 points of Harm. In n-20 point spreads, the first number is the minimum Harm the weapon can do when it hits the target.

Many Extraordinary bonuses and Powers have Harm ranges from the following progression: 3-5 (d3+2), 6-8 (d3+5), 9-12 (d4+8), 13-16 (d4+12), 17-20 (d4+16), 21-25 (d5+20), 26-35 (d10+25), and 36-50 (d15+35). Those at the upper limit are very, very rare.

Quote:

5) I am still getting used to going from a combat round of 1 minute (1E) to 6 seconds (3E). Feels too constrictive somehow. No way I can ever play GURPS, their round is 1 second I believe! Have your players had any problems with a mere 3 seconds per ABC? Something along the lines of: Avatar: "Ok, I take my backpack off, find that potion, and drink it." LM: "No way you can do all that in 3 seconds." Would this action just carry over into more than one ABC then?

It should surprise nobody that all of the players, save Alex, my youngest son soon to hit the bit 16, are well-versed in all forms of A/D&D. Not a one has had any problems with the 3-second Activity Block Count. In fact, there are no arguments, as it makes it pretty easy to count seconds and figure for oneself how long an action or series thereof takes. This the LM adjusts mentally, of course for the Avatar's Speed Base Rating as modified by protection factors--shielded, armor, or Power.

Finally, as the system is rules light, the flow of action is the most important thing, so if a player hesitates, the Avatar is doing likewise, and if he is eagerly issuing instructions as to actions, then the Avatar is like a ball of fire.

Quote:

6) Any particular reason why common RPG terminology was changed, like "rounds" to "ABCs" and "damage" to "Harm"? Was this just for flavor? (Not that after gaining familiarity it wouldn't become second nature I am sure.)

The principal reason for the new terminology is to move the mindset of the participants from A/D&D and like game systems to that of the LA one, for it plays quite differently, and getting into the spirit of the system aids greatly in understanding the game and enjoying it. Of course having a separate patois, if you will, also sets the gamers using it apart when they describe some gaming activity in those terms. Needless to say, all LA gamers, myself included, quite frequently slip into the "rounds" and "damage" and "spell" terminology. Old habits die hard. However, once you begin to think using those gaming terms, then thinking within the LA system is easy.

PQUOTE]o hu ru o ay d u o f ru e 3 u 1 tif s 1 ik hgf udxab p fas sis ruo as tu s u , thu d 3 t l p's f , w r i t a t f f s t u s f k 1 t r u s g t h 1 i 1 t h a t i t ' 1 r 3 f u 1 f i g h t u t a s s l i k a s h u s s 1 u w d r t f a s y a s s a f f f f k o t h u t h i s f g a f i s g l t h f 1 u f i s u 1 l 1 a i s u a r f i u r u i k t h i 1 i 1 s f t t h u , t u f r a f u y k k f r 3 r a f f (t h i 1 u a s s y f 3 w i 3 s f g i t u f u 1 k u u w h a i n u l (3 k 1 a t a f f) f u t o w f 3 f s a f 1 f a l l u , t i t i k y f 3 r a s t i o w u r f t y : i t ' a B f 3 w a t h u 1 r 3 f [/ Q U O T E] p ! " ;)

The www.lejendary.com boards are where this discussion should continue ;) I never urge anyone to buy the rule book unless they think they want to collect it for their library--or better still see if they will like it in play. An unsatisfied buyer is not likely to promote the game, so better not to buy if unsure!

Cheers,
Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 10th September, 2002, 09:38 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by optimizer
Howdy!

I just wanted to say that this was a nice story on how you created a world. Any chance you will include this tale in your World Builder's Guide?

Thanks.

Mike

Mike, the coming book of that name is really more of a "descriptive" reference for all that needs to be placed into the text of a work on fantasy, not how to create the world.

Alan Kellogg is now working on how to create a fantasy nation/state, and that book will be done later on in the series. I'll have to consider the potential for a treatment of how to start from scratch, so to speak, fashion the planet, its terrain. It might fill a vast tome, or be only a slim volume, depending on how much detail were given. To be useful, I think the former is called for, and I don't know how many gamers would really want to delve into such a detailed work.

Gary

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 10th September, 2002, 09:41 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by optimizer
Howdy!

Nice example. Any chance of posting a copy of it over at www.lejendary.com?

Thanks again!

Mike

Consider it done:) I'll go back, copy my post, and then hit the lejendary website with it.

Gary

KingOfChaos

Tuesday, 10th September, 2002, 10:14 PM

I'd just like to apologize to Gary if I scared him the other night with my fanboy tendencies. :)

Col_Pladoh

Tuesday, 10th September, 2002, 10:28 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by KingOfChaos
I'd just like to apologize to Gary if I scared him the other night with my fanboy tendencies. :)

Your thought is appreciated, amigo, but not much scares me outside getting mail from the IRS... :eek:

To me the main thing in a chat is my read of a question and how to answer it properly--or not! working in a rather chaotic environment, with a time limit, is not so easy. If I weren't a "Columbis Method" typist, likely it would be easier, but...

Golem Joe

Wednesday, 11th September, 2002, 12:52 AM

Quote:

*Originally posted by optimizer****IIIRC, the LA rules doesn't go into detail on which dice to roll in this case -- the assumption is that the players know how to convert a range into the mix of dice needed to generate the specified distribution.***

Mike,

Not so. The dice to use are both listed in the Lejendary Rules for All Players (hidden in the weapon notes unfortunately) and also prominently in the Beasts of Lejend book.

Nathal

Wednesday, 11th September, 2002, 03:19 AM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col_Pladoh****Mike, the coming book of that name is really more of a "descriptive" reference for all that needs to be placed into the text of a work on fantasy, not how to create the world.******Gary***

I thought I'd put my 2 cents in here, as the co-author of the World Builder. A question was asked of me on another forum, "I wish to know if this book is going to only be a work full of items, or is there going to be some actual planned uses for it."

My answer: The book aids in describing things...it is a "descriptive". It is not just items but also includes a section on real world facts (container weight capacities, gemstones, herbalist lore, geography, etc). The use for the book is to aid when designing a dungeon or any above ground locale. You can use the book as a means to make every place unique. The book can also be used "on the fly"...answering questions such as, "what's in the barrel?" or "I search the body...what do I find?" or "what's in this library?" or "what kind of wood is that chest made out of?"...

Another comment: "If it is going to be listing items, I find that books like that are not that useful to me."

Answer: Yes, it lists items and EVERYTHING inbetween. Flora, fauna, government types, building types and construction materials, etc. If the "detail" aspects of game mastering come to you naturally and if such a massive resource of stuff would not aid in brainstorming, then...I'm impressed. You're right though. I'd bet the sort of GMs who benefit most from such a book are those who focus mostly on story rather than environments. For them this book will be a great aid.

And another question: "What would be some of the helpful ways one could use this book??"

Answer: Let's say you have a game the next night and you want to create a wizards tower and region. You open up the World Builders guide and look a list of the terrain types, tree types, unusual land features, etc and pick them according to your vision...in this it is a creative "brainstorming" aid. Then you go to the building material section and construct your tower using the book to as a guide to architecture, which will help to describe the place later in-game. And then you use the WB to add rooms to the tower, not according to random charts (although some are provided) but rather according to taste and logic. Lastly, you fill in those rooms with decorations, items, wall and ceiling type, blah blah blah. It's all there.

Could you do this without the World Builders? Sure, but this resource can make such work go faster, help to inspire, and represents material from dozens of sources that would take one person a while to unearth and keep in his notebook. I worked on this thing with Gary for nearly two years...I want to use the damn thing now, because a print out of the whole manuscript is HUGE...I want a nice layout like the one that the Trolls will be doing.

There is also tons of D20 material, like new weapons, herbs by magical property (with a magical herb list culled from a database that my wife compiled over a years time)...and much more. The table of contents alone is impressive.

In the end, some will find that such a tool is not for them. Not all GMS will find such detail a chore and would rather re-invent the wheel, so to speak. Those are some wonky fellows to be sure. Heh.

Rel

Wednesday, 11th September, 2002, 03:18 PM

I don't want to take this thread off topic (if it can be said to have a "topic") but when does that book come out and where can I order one? Cause I'm grabbing that thing in a skinny minute.

Storm Raven

Wednesday, 11th September, 2002, 03:58 PM

Re: Re: Re: Questions for Gary

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col_Pladoh****No way I am going to get involved in a critical analysis of 3E now, amigo. I will say that while you suggest that some players stick with a single-class character, is that because of the way the game is done or in spite of it? Also, the way that skills and feats are presented tends to both encourage multi-classing while blurring the archetypes. Yes, one can still play 3E with archetypes, but the system does not encourage it, nor is that in the spirit of the system--gaining power.***

Well, just to answer your basic question: from actual game play, the system favors single classed characters in general. Some character visions (such as the Gerd the Rogue presented in the appendix of the very first book of his series) don't fit some of the basic archetypes, but for the most part, playing the single classed archetypal character is the most "effective" way to advance.

Quote:

Originally posted by Rel

I don't want to take this thread off topic (if it can be said to have a "topic") but when does that book come out and where can I order one? Cause I'm grabbing that thing in a skinny minute.

As the work will bear the D20 logo, I don't think you are taking the thread too far off topic ;)

Surf on over to the Troll Lord Games website, and you'll see the promo for CANTING CREW and the rest of the series planned for the "Gygaxian" Fantasy World reference works. All are basically generic, meant to make the task of creating and developing fantasy material for stories, modules, and the like easier for the one so doing.

<http://www.trolllord.com/id176.htm>

TLG has left off the list a book of names we are working on. If the general line does well, the series will be extended to cover some additional things such as principal archetypes and perhaps even an expanded version of my "joke" magic items catalog.

Gary

Vocenoctum

Wednesday, 11th September, 2002, 06:25 PM

Okay, my questions;

- 1) Ever heard something referred to as Gygaxian? How does it feel to be a descriptive term? :)
- 2) how do you feel about the Cult that has sprang up around you? What about those that in a way revere you, but probably haven't seen anything outside your A/D&D stuff?
- 3) How do other game designers/ authors treat you? I'm sure you have some that love or hate you based on your past work, but in general, are they polite or are you one of the crowd etc?

Thanks :)

Larcen

Wednesday, 11th September, 2002, 08:58 PM

EDIT: I just went back and reread your message Gary and was reminded that you suggested we continue this conversation elsewhere. Sorry I forgot. Disregard if you like.

~~~~~

Hi Gary, thanks for all the responses. I have been busy so I couldn't get back to you right away. Actually, I still am pretty busy here at work so I'll make it quick, and I promise this is the last LA mechanic question I'll ask here. I just wanted to clear this up:

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

...

***Heh, well, maybe that armor doesn't really reduce the chance to be struck, but rather it absorbs damage (Harm in LA game terms) delivered by the attack. In the wash though, the effect of either system is much the same, so it's a mechanic, not a commentary on combat.***

...

I wasn't referring to armor which is the reason why I used the term "defense value". I meant such things as (but by no means all of) the defender's speed, agility, size, parry, dodging, skill, intuition, etc. Shouldn't these kinds of things determine if the attack hit home in the first place, even before armor comes into play?

Thanks for your infinite patience with us rules lawyers. Look at it this way, if LA can survive US, it can survive anything. :D Unless of course the system wasn't MEANT for us... :p

---

## Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 11th September, 2002, 11:24 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Vocenoctum*

***Okay, my questions;***

- 1) Ever heard something referred to as Gygaxian? How does it feel to be a descriptive term? :)
- 2) how do you feel about the Cult that has sprang up around you? What about those that in a way revere you, but probably haven't seen anything outside your A/D&D stuff?
- 3) How do other game designers/ authors treat you? I'm sure you have some that love or hate you based on your past work, but in general, are they polite or are you one of the crowd etc?

***Thanks :)***

Some brief answers to the above:

1. I admit I was somewhat taken aback when I first heard the term "Gygaxian" bandied about. It is, I suppose, a rather unavoidable thing considering my work and my style :eek: That aside, it hasn't turned my head...
2. A cult following? Damn! Why aren't I getting rich on contributions and surrounded by lots of comely groupies then? Seriously, there is a solid fan base for my creative work, and that's much appreciated by me. Not seeing my work outside the D&D field is unforgivable, though. Members of the Cult! hie thee hence and immediately buy all of the products not associated with AD&D, or face my wrath :rolleyes: Okay, okay, buy what grabs you and ignore the rest.
3. As to relations with other designers, I really can't say. Better ask them. I am pretty much isolated and working all the time here, and even at cons I am usually so busy I don't have much schmoozing opportunity. Fact is I pay more attention to gamers there than I do to other creative types. I get along quite well with a number of game designers I know, and I'm on speaking terms with many others. Of course there are a few I don't really care to associate with--likely that feeling is mutual:D

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 11th September, 2002, 11:34 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Larcen*

**EDIT: I just went back and reread your message Gary and was reminded that you suggested we continue this conversation elsewhere. Sorry I forgot. Disregard if you like.**

---

As my response is pretty brief, as you'll soon see, there's no reason not to take care of this here ;)

Quote:

---

**Hi Gary, thanks for all the responses. I have been busy so I couldn't get back to you right away. Actually, I still am pretty busy here at work so I'll make it quick, and I promise this is the last LA mechanic question I'll ask here. I just wanted to clear this up:**

***I wasn't referring to armor which is the reason why I used the term "defense value". I meant such things as (but by no means all of) the defender's speed, agility, size, parry, dodging, skill, intuition, etc. Shouldn't these kinds of things determine if the attack hit home in the first place, even before armor comes into play?***

***Thanks for your infinite patience with us rules lawyers. Look at it this way, if LA can survive US, it can survive anything. :D Unless of course the system wasn't MEANT for us... :p***

---

The LA game is not a wargame, not only it it rules light, but it is fantasy. Some fantasy things I feel are important--monsters and their attack forms, magical things. Details of imagined combat such as you mention are things that in my view slow down the game, interpose themselves in the flow of play, belong in combat simulation exercises, not in FRPGs.

When I hear from someone that ignoring factors such as you mention isn't "realistic" I must confess I have to shake my head. Not only is the very premise of the FRPG wholly unrealistic and fantastic, but all of those factors are likewise based on little more than supposition and make believe. Dealing with them adds nothing to the roleplaying and ad nauseum to the rules required to handle combats that stretch into hours.

And that's the way I see it.

Of course if I were designing a game of tactical warfare with miniature figurines, I'd want to have such things dealt with in exhaustive detail.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Golem Joe

Thursday, 12th September, 2002, 03:17 AM

Gary didn't say it, but it is relevant to the question.

With characters, speed does not have a great effect on avoiding being hit. It does, however, factor into avoiding disasters (sort of a Reflex save). Lots of smaller, more agile animals and monsters gain additional protection from this, but it is not standardized in any way.

I would like to point out that one ability, Swashbuckling (from the Canting Crew) does impart bonuses to Armor Protection due to Agility. Swashbuckling adds one point to Defense protection for every 10 points possessed, and one point per five to any parry attempt, so long as the character wears only minimal armor (cloth or leather).

Parrying is covered as part of the core rules.

That's all.

---

Draco Argentum

Thursday, 12th September, 2002, 06:26 AM

You're still here answering questions? Thanks for humoring us. :)

Gary where did the idea for having the chromatic and metallic dragons come from?

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## Q&A with Gary Gygax - Part I

Printable View

Page 12 of 36    << First    ...    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10    11    10    13    14    15    16    17    18    19    20    21    22    ...    Last >>    Show 20 post(s) from this thread on one page

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 12th September, 2002, 03:45 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Draco Argentum*

**You're still here answering questions? Thanks for humoring us. :)**

**Gary where did the idea for having the chromatic and metallic dragons come from?**

Humoring y'all? No way! It's more like sitting around with a big bunch of fellow game devotees and enjoying a good bit of talk. I should thank all the posters for making my days more fun--writing game still all the time gets to make one somewhat stale, so these breaks are fun and refreshing.

Anyway, to your question: If you read the intro to the SLAYER'S GUIDE TO DRAGONS from Mongoose, you'll see therein how I came up with the chromatic dragons. Some colors other than red were needed, hues that would be harmonious with their breath weapons. When I'd done the four new additions to the CHAINMAIL red dragon, it seemed a good plan to have a LG dragon, one of gold color that was based on the Oriental model. From that I worked on the rest of the metallic species. Of course, such potent creatures needed great leaders or masters, so I delved into mythology for the names--Tiamat and Bahamut--and thus came up with the Evil Queen and good King of the chromatic and the metallic dragons.

Cheerio,  
Gary

BoGGiT

Thursday, 12th September, 2002, 10:58 PM

Mr. Gygax, or Gary if you prefer a slightly more informal tone, i know that you didn't invent the term "Gygaxian fantasy", but if i gave you free hands to define the term, what would the definition be?

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 12th September, 2002, 11:31 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by BoGGiT*

**Mr. Gygax, or Gary if you prefer a slightly more informal tone, i know that you didn't invent the term "Gygaxian fantasy", but if i gave you free hands to define the term, what would the definition be?**

Gary it is ;)

As for a definition, well... I choose to point to the style of writing and attention to certain sorts of detail. As it isn't a dictionary sort of thing, the matter is open to interpretation :eek: Mine will be put forth as per the CANTING CREW and subsequent volumes if the series as regards the fantasy world.

Cheerio,  
Gary

Fool

Friday, 13th September, 2002, 12:46 AM

Gary,

Here's another thanks for answering all these questions.

When I first got into D&D in the 80's, Gygax was a name out of myth with no more reality than characters we were playing. Thanks for putting a personality to the person. It's wonderful to see you have the same love of games after all these years.

If I have to append a question, here's one: What's with all the traps?? ;)

Take care, and don't let this take you too long from your work!

MerricB

Friday, 13th September, 2002, 02:06 AM

O Great and Gygaxian Gary, who we implore not to let our henchmen near our magic carpets...

How long did it take you to write Necropolis? Wow! There's so much in that module/supplement/thing!

With D&D, when I think of the basic experience in the game, it's of a party of adventurers entering a dungeon, killing monsters, avoiding traps (hopefully!) and gaining treasure. Of course, the game then expands beyond that greatly, but that's what I consider the basic experience.

Is there such a thing for LA?

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by MerricB*  
***Is there such a thing for LA?***

---

As one who has played "Legendary Adventure"...

LA is great for combat! Characters start out pretty damn tough too. One can make a warrior mage who can summon demons right from the start, or open a pit to perdition beneath your foe...of course doing so may open a gate that cannot be closed.

"Jack of all trades" in LA do not have as much combat power, of course. Basically, your characters start out as heroes, especially if you have them focus on a few skills, which are extremely broad-based allowing for great variation.

Here is my review of the game, for the curious:

The mechanics of the game are simple, being percentage based. Ability scores are generally expressed as a number ranging from 1 to 100, and are three in number: Health (mental and physical), Precision (mental and physical), and Speed (again, mental and physical). A forth ability score, Intellect, is provided as an optional rule. One criticism of the ability system has been in cases of characters who may be healthy in one aspect of an ability such as Precision (say, he or she is a dead-shot with the bow), but lacking in another aspect of that ability (for example, this dead-shot with the bow fellow could be otherwise mentally clumsy, according to character concept). So, it might be asked, can the rules accommodate a Steven-Hawkings type, who is sharp of mind but not of body, which would seem to indicate a simultaneously high and low health rating (high mental health and precision, but low physical health and precision, nearly zero). The answer to that is yes. The system is so simple that if the player--with the approval of his GM--wishes to hamper his character in such a way, he may simply state that the ability score relevant to the disadvantage is halved, or even worse, when checking against it or associated abilities. Why a player would want such a major disadvantage is left to the imagination of my readers. The system is "rules light" so as to facilitate the whim of the GM, and is very flexible with interpretations. What some players have misunderstood is that this flexibility was intentional, and wrongly accused the game of being undefinitive in matters of ability scores or in the limitations of applied skills. Which brings us to the issue of skills...

The skill system of LA is "broad-based" in a fashion similar to the concept behind the three basic ability scores described above. Some of them may overlap in their general applications, such as Forestry or Savagery, because they are not only broad-based skills, but may be used to simultaneously describe character background in a meaningful way. That is why they are called "abilities" instead, because they may be skills or advantages. Therefore a scout-type and a druid-type may have similar abilities but each would be described by slightly different means; for example, the skills Hunt, Ranging and Rustic may be used for one, while Ranging, Savagery and Nomadic are used for the other. Hunt, for instance, used as a broad based skill, covers a wide range of activity beyond the simple activities of tracking and shooting game, such as "woodcraft, survival, the chase, tracking, recognition of flora and fauna, concealment and camouflage in woods, etc.". Another example would be a strong warrior whose strength is represented by the Physique ability, and whose background in the knighthood is represented by his Chivalry ability. The chivalry ability is great example of a "background" ability, and adds to the character's fighting prowess, among other less game-mechanic oriented benefits.

Due to the broad-based skill system, the GM has the freedom to choose a large number of relevant abilities in any given situation, asking for a simple percentage check. The skills are each based on one of the three base ratings. One advantage of this skill system is that few characters have a skill that is completely useless, or that cannot be creatively applied to a situation. Therefore a broad-based skill system encourages role-playing and creative thinking. Otherwise, a GM who enjoys more detail in his skill system would have no trouble breaking down the broad groups into small divisions.

Characters may belong to Orders, which are akin to character classes, but are not necessary in order to create an interesting character. The Orders are intended to reflect society, are based on the medieval European standard, and are ranked in a hierarchical fashion, like character levels. Each "rank" provides benefits to those characters who belong to the order. characters who are unordered are so only in the sense that they do not fit into human culture precisely, but the GM may create a non-human order to fit him or her with ease.

The equipment and weapons provided are predictable for a fantasy role-playing game. The armor is described in terms of full or half suits and simply absorbs damage, and is therefore similar to Palladiums armor system (though there is no AR to consider), or GURPS, etc. Armor does have a limited capacity to absorb damage, and may be repaired with a logical combination of skills. The differences between weapons are determined by the bonus or penalty to precision, speed class, range and harm class (penetration or shock damage generally). However, a dagger may kill as readily as a sword, provided it is wielded with skill, penetrates the armor and strikes true. In other words, damage ranges are less important in this game than the other factors described above, and in playtest this has been satisfying to me. Again, all GMs normally tinker with rules to suit themselves and this combat system is so simple that such adjustments are not only easy but encouraged.

Combat is simple, to-hit determined by relevant ability (Weapons) or natural Precision rating for animals, or Unarmed combat skill for hand-to-hand. All "to-hit" rolls are ten-siders, modified by any number of things that can be included or discounted, depending on the style of the GM.

The spell system is broken up into several different types: Enchantment (typical mages), Geourgy (Elemental), Necrourgy (necromantic, obviously), Psychogenic (not considered "magic" of course), Sorcery (summon demons, etc.), and Theurgy (Priestcraft). The spells are nearly all fun and interesting (some just plain funny), use a spell-point system, and are generally very powerful. Spellslingers who are unprotected, as in many RPGs, may have a tough time releasing their spell power, but in the right circumstances, summoning a demon to your aid--or if a priest, a holy avenging spirit--is very entertaining. Any sort of basic magic that a fantasy gamer would expect to see is here. Characters and powers, if compared to D&D, would begin mid to high level in terms of ability to "get the job done". But there the two systems have little in common. D&D is a precise system, detailing everything and giving rules for nearly every common circumstance. LA is less precise and leaves much up to the whim of the GM, which suits my taste very well. I feel the game is better aimed at experienced GMs, but is easy to teach to less experienced players if need be. The Xp system assumes gradual advancement, but is not glacially slow either. Non-player characters are easy to create, and the game is easy to adopt to any kind of story line that may spring into mind. Game-balance and challenge level is easy to judge without consulting charts, the creatures described in the "Beasts of Lejend" book are simple to integrate, even on a fly-by-the-seat-of-your-pants kind of session, and the "Lejend Master's Lore" book provides enough alternate systems and optional rules to satisfy most GMs who wish greater complexity.

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Fool  
Gary,*

***Here's another thanks for answering all these questions.***

***When I first got into D&D in the 80's, Gygax was a name out of myth with no more reality than characters we were playing. Thanks for putting a personality to the person. It's wonderful to see you have the same love of games after all these years.***

***If I have to append a question, here's one: What's with all the traps?? ;)***

***Take care, and don't let this take you too long from your work!***

---

Again, quite welcome and my bit of fun;)

As for the traps, we originally played dungeon crawls much of the time. My dungeon levels were both an exploration/mapping problem to solve and a place for encounters. As I would place perhaps 15 or so active encounters on a level of many passagerways and as many as 50 or so rooms, to keep things "interesting" I'd include various traps. That became a de rigeur thing in general from around 1977 on. Of course when combined with monsters and NPCs, traps add a degree of complexity to encounters too, so they are a handy tool.

That cover it?

Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 13th September, 2002, 05:35 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by MerricB  
O Great and Gygaxian Gary, who we implore not to let our henchmen near our magic carpets...*

---

Too late! Quij is even now fondling your PC's best volitant rug, virtually slavering over how it will look as his new poncho...

Quote:

---

***How long did it take you to write Necropolis? Wow! There's so much in that module/supplement/thing!***

***With D&D, when I think of the basic experience in the game, it's of a party of adventurers entering a dungeon, killing monsters, avoiding traps (hopefully!) and gaining treasure. Of course, the game then expands beyond that greatly, but that's what I consider the basic experience.***

***Is there such a thing for LA?***

***Cheers & best wishes!***

---

Okay, to the questions and comments:D

It took me about three months of time of design and write NECROPOLIS. As I went along I had a group to play-test the material, so I was a bit slower than usual. With just straight map-making and writing, devising new monsters and magic, the job could have been done in about two months--that's working about 50 hours a week on it, of course.

funny you should mention encounters and traps, and see my post replying to the one just prior to your own. Dungeoneering was and still is a marvelous part of the D&D experience, even though I fully concur with your statement that the RPG is much more than that.

As for the LA game, indeed! One of the introductory modules has what is basically a dungeon crawl theme. In THE HERMIT I have included a rather tricky dungeon to get through, and of course in the HALL OF MANY PANES you can bet I have some considerable portions with that theme, although in total they don't amount to so much as half of the content.

Chris Clark and I have done CASTLE WOLFMOON, it being an intense dungeon-crawl at its heart. When that will be in print, though, is still a question. It got to be so large that we are looking at doing it in perhaps five installments. It too will be D20 and LA system friendly ;)

Cherio,  
Gary

---

Fool

Friday, 13th September, 2002, 07:03 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***Of course when combined with monsters and NPCs, traps add a degree of complexity to encounters too, so they are a handy tool.***

***That cover it?***

---

Quite. And agreed. And thanks.

---

## Larcen

Saturday, 14th September, 2002, 05:12 AM

Alright, its the weekend and I finally have some time to ask more questions, if you be so willing. I still can't believe that we have THE Gygax "on tap" here so to speak. :cool:

Without further ado:

- 1) One of the things I love about D&D is the brilliant cosmology of planes. How did you come up with all the cool planes (inner, outer, etc.) and how they interact with each other? How much of this was based on your readings into such matters?
- 2) How do you pronounce Gygax, Ioun, Iuz, Tarrasque, Lich, and Tiamat? I pronounce them GUY-gax, Yoon, Yuz, tar-ASK, litch, and TEE-a-matt.
- 3) How did the Simpsons episode that you were in come about and how much say did you have in the show's content? What other film appearances have you made?
- 4) What were Mordy's favorite AD&D combat spells and tactics especially in the REALLY tough fights?
- 5) What the best way to get a group of stubborn set-in-their-ways players to try a new game like LA? Our group hasn't played anything but D&D in over 20 years. (Not that that is a BAD thing. ;) )

Thanks, and do let us know when all these questions start to become a chore, ok? :eek:

---

## Draco Argentum

Saturday, 14th September, 2002, 11:20 AM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***Anyway, to your question: If you read the intro to the SLAYER'S GUIDE TO DRAGONS fromMongoose,***

---

Its actually on my to by list but I haven't seen it in my local store.

Thanks for the answer.:)

---

## Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 14th September, 2002, 04:13 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Larcen*

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***Thanks, and do let us know when all these questions start to become a chore, ok? :eek:***

---

Thanks:)

The guys who play here regularly wish I would shut up. Familiarity and all that... So to the as to your Qs:

1. The planes sort of developed as a mix of reading and game need. What I did was to take the mythological and fabulous, arrange them to suit the D&D system, and as AD&D was developing they sort of gelled into the cosmology shown therein. In all it was a great facilitator for creatures and beings from outside the material.
2. GUY-gax is how my family pronounces the name, but in proper Swiss it is pronounced GHE-gox. As for Ioun, I say Eeun but Yoon sounds fine, and so too Eeuse, but Yuz is okay, We almost agree on the pronunciation of Tarrasque--err-ASK TO YOUR tar-ASK, WE HARMONIZE ON litch (many prefer lick), and Tiamat as TEE-a-matt.
3. the show contacted me, sent the preliminary script, and I was delighted. Of course I asked for a bigger role, more than minimum, and other foolishness in joking with David X. Cohen, a former D&Der and DM :D It was great fun working with him even over a clean phone line. Naturally I urged them to fly me out to their location in California, but alas, that too was to no avail ;)
4. Mordenkainen always had a fair stock of magic missile, fire ball, and lightning bolt spells to go with ice storm, cone of cold, cloudkill, death

spell, and power word stun (later on) Evard's black tentacles was another oft-used casting. Dropping a cloudkill spell around his party and advancing on low-level monsters was a lot of fun. Of course depending on intelligence he would alter the usual. Mordie had some pretty extensive spell books, of course, and he and Bigby exchanged spells to broaden their repertoires.

5. Getting grognards to try something new is really difficult. What I have heard from a couple of other DMs is that they prepared their groups beforehand by saying we are going to try one session of the new system--if you like it we'll play it maybe once a month as a change of pace. One such group had a holdout who refused to play, came to the session to watch and criticize. He ended up doing a lot of roleplaying, liked the LA game more than the rest, and allowed it was okay...after OAD&D.

Welcome, and I'll holler when I need to cut back on posts. I do have a couple of likely new projects pending, and they'll need attention soon if I undertake either. Both will mean a really busy fall and winter, which ain't bad in many respects, as I hate winter, and that'll make the time pass swiftly.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 14th September, 2002, 04:20 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Draco Argentum*

***Its actually on my to by list but I haven't seen it in my local store.***

***Thanks for the answer.:***

---

As a member of B.A.D.D. it is virtually obligatory for you to acquire the SLAYER'S GUIDE TO DRAGONS. Funny name for the book, as it is really more a Dragons Guide to PC Slaying :eek:

The man exception is the (somewhat truncated) adventure, that meant for the DM to give his players a chance to kick some dragon butt--if they are very good.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

JohnRTroy

Saturday, 14th September, 2002, 09:45 PM

Heh...

Hi Gary,

Well, as long as your answering the question elsewhere...

What's your opinion about the Book of Vile Darkness?

:D

(Sorry, just felt the subject would benefit a broader audience than it has now...)

---

Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 14th September, 2002, 10:06 PM

Re: Heh...

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by JohnRTroy*

***Hi Gary,***

***Well, as long as your answering the question elsewhere...***

***What's your opinion about the Book of Vile Darkness?***

***:D***

***(Sorry, just felt the subject would benefit a broader audience than it has now...)***

---

On no you don't JRT! Eric has already locked up a thread of mine where I said my initial say about the matter. As long as everyone's having a good time here, I'll shun that topic as if it were a ill-advised gaming product!

Ciao,  
Gary

---

JohnRTroy

Saturday, 14th September, 2002, 10:19 PM

OK, Okay

Oh, didn't know it was posted elsewhere...

Damn, I love it when ya rant... :)

---

sotterraneo

Sunday, 15th September, 2002, 12:38 AM

Re: Re: Heh...

---

Mr. Gygax, as various other people here I too want to thank you for the wonderful experiences given to me by the D&D game: not only long lasting friends, countless hours of fun and doing exciting 8-] things as tournament and convention organizing, but my career choice too. No, I'm not a publisher or an author (unless you consider translations as being an author...), I'm a games retailer here in Italy - perhaps not a flashy job as designing, writing or publishing but without us, no gaming industry... 8-]

I had the pleasure and honor to meet you in person, along many Italian fans, during an Italian convention (I think in '98) in Modena, the city of Ferrari cars. I had imagined you different but, hey, the latest photos of you I had seen were 15 years old. Anyway, the D&D Basic Set and D&D The Keep on the Borderlands adventure you autographed for me are still a priceless treasure of my collection (right along the Orange B3 module 8-]).

A couple of questions:

1) Time and engagements of yours permitting, is there any chance to see you again in Italy or in a 'reacheable' country such as France, UK or Germany? Would you accept an invitation from an Italian convention?

2) Why TSR, Inc. killed the D&D game and devoted all the efforts to AD&D? It was a VERY bad move here and many fans, like me, simply never felt to 'move' or 'evolve' to AD&D - we kept playing D&D and started to buy other products because there was nothing more for us from TSR, Inc.

Thank you so much for almost 20 years of gaming. It was worth it!

Ciro Alessandro Sacco  
Brescia - Italy

---

Vocenoctum

Sunday, 15th September, 2002, 03:19 PM

Thanks for the answers, here's an easy one waiting for a Gygaxian answer. :)

How do you think the 3e bard compares with the 1e bard? Why did the original bard require Rogue? Any thoughts to reinventing it as it was for 3e?

Thanks again!

---

Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 15th September, 2002, 04:01 PM

Re: Re: Re: Heh...

---

Quote:

*Originally posted by sotterraneo*

***Mr. Gygax, as various other people here I too want to thank you for the wonderful experiences given to me by the D&D game: not only long lasting friends, countless hours of fun and doing exciting 8-] things as tournament and convention organizing, but my career choice too. No, I'm not a publisher or an author (unless you consider translations as being an author...), I'm a games retailer here in Italy - perhaps not a flashy job as designing, writing or publishing but without us, no gaming industry... 8-]***

Don't denigrate the position you have, amigo. It is a great one IMO, and you get to relate to gamers a lot and likely play many games as part of your "work" too. An enviable position;)

Quote:

***I had the pleasure and honor to meet you in person, along many Italian fans, during an Italian convention (I think in '98) in Modena, the city of Ferrari cars. I had imagined you different but, hey, the latest photos of you I had seen were 15 years old. Anyway, the D&D Basic Set and D&D The Keep on the Borderlands adventure you autographed for me are still a priceless treasure of my collection (right along the Orange B3 module 8-]).***

I think it was ModCon99, as Alex was with me, had just turned 13 a week or so before we attended. As for looking different, well, that's what time does for you, eh? As for me, I'm just happy to be around still :eek:

Quote:

***A couple of questions:***

***1) Time and engagements of yours permitting, is there any chance to see you again in Italy or in a 'reacheable' country such as France, UK or Germany? Would you accept an invitation from an Italian convention?***

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***Thank you so much for almost 20 years of gaming. It was worth it!***

***Ciro Alessandro Sacco  
Brescia - Italy***

---

1) Well, when we were in Italy, Alex said: "The food here is great, all the gamers are friendly, and the girls are really pretty. We can move here anytime you want to, Dad." So, is Alex has any input, I suspect the answer is a positive one. Fact is, though, I am very busy, and going to cons here in the US or overseas takes about two weeks out of my working time when all is said and done. Thus Trigea levies a hefty fee on my

appearances. I hate travelling--although I love to be in new places--so I generally don't mind not going. The most likely scenario is in regards to the LA MMPO RPG. The developers, Dreams-Interactive, are in Europe. If all goes as planned, around 2004 we will be in beta test, and then I'll likely be needed over there--Belgium. Once I'm in Europe, well, I have a good friend in France, and I like Germany, Italy, and Spain, enjoy England too...

2) From the larger perspective Alessandro, the AD&D game was the best move TSR ever made. Sales jumped incredibly when it was released, and I do believe that even 3E has not met the volume that those original books attained--could be wrong there, but... Anyway, I do agree with you that it was a mistake for TSR not to continue to support the D&D game line too. I urged that we do so, but that advice was ignored.

You are most welcome--I've had a great time creating and playing games, so the whole is mutual.

Ciao,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 15th September, 2002, 04:06 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Vocenoctum*

***Thanks for the answers, here's an easy one waiting for a Gygaxian answer. :)***

***How do you think the 3e bard compares with the 1e bard? Why did the original bard require Rogue? Any thoughts to reinventing it as it was for 3e?***

***Thanks again!***

---

Well darn! It isn't as easy a query as you suggest. The only way I could give an intelligent response is to have played the 3E bard for several adventures, comparing and contrasting it with the original version. That I have not had opportunity to do.

By "Rogue" above I assume you actually mean "thief" ;) I included that as most fictional treatments of bard-like characters were roguish, engaged in some nefarious activity such as stealing.

Cheerio,  
Gary

▼ Page 12 of 36    ◀◀ First   ◀ ...   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11   12   13   14   15   16   17   18   19   20   21   22   ...   ▶   Last ▶▶   Show 20 post(s) from this thread on one page

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Sir Edgar

Sunday, 15th September, 2002, 05:59 PM

It seems like you don't really look at the work of other creators or even current D&D rules very much. Is this deliberate so that you don't taint any of your thoughts and ideas in the creation process or are you simply not interested? Also, where do you get your inspiration? Do you read a lot books and if so, which kinds? Do you do any research on the Internet? How much of your creative process is based on folklore and mythology vs. science fiction? Thanks.

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 12:33 AM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Sir Edgar*

***It seems like you don't really look at the work of other creators or even current D&D rules very much. Is this deliberate so that you don't taint any of your thoughts and ideas in the creation process or are you simply not interested? Also, where do you get your inspiration? Do you read a lot books and if so, which kinds? Do you do any research on the Internet? How much of your creative process is based on folklore and mythology vs. science fiction? Thanks.***

Whoa!

SirE, that's a lot of queries packed into a single paragraph, and some that would call for pages-long responses :eek:

I have never read a lot of other game creators work--in fact only when I intend to play a game do I read the rules. Otherwise, it isn't a matter of "taint," but one of believing I have sufficient of my own ideas to need to borrow from others not associated with the project I am doing. Of course when I workj with a co-writer it is a shared work.

My inspiration came originally form about 15 years of reading fiary tales, childrens' books, fables, Westerns, mythology, mysteries, folklore, detective stories including Sherlock Holmes and Nyland Smith, adventure tales, history, military history, SF and fantasy, Edgar Allen Poe--just about anything that seemed even vaguely interesting or informative. I have read literally thousands of books, and I still read a book or so a week, even when doing a lot of writing. These days I read mainly history and inaginative literature, but I have perused THE SOCIETY OF THE MIND and THE ORIGINS OF CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE BREAKDOWN OF THE BICAMERAL MIND not many years back. For light rwding I am currently reading MORE TALES OF IRISH GHOSTS and TOM BROWN'S SCHOOL DAYS.

Of course I must add radio, comic books, movies, school studies, TV, conversations, and observation of people and places to the inspirational sources. Foreign travel is especially interesting and helpful.

For some bibliographil suggestioons see the OAD&D DMG, Appendic L or M, I believe. Also in the MYTHUS game book there is an extensive bibvliography and reading list for fantasy.

I do not do much research on the internet, although now and then I find something of interest. Basicaly, I much prefer hardcopy, a book to read, take notes from, and re-read.

My initial work was a blend of history (from my wargaming roots), muth and mythology, and authored fiction. Currently I am much more interested in history than in fiction.

Cheerio,  
Gary

jester47

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 12:58 AM

Gary,

I have to admit that I am very much a Vecna fan. I figure you might have an inside view of Vecnology and might be able to answer my questions. I think one of the coolest things about Vecna is that he was not developed. While I think it is somewhat cool and original, the 2E treatment does sort of damage the mystique and sheer mystery of the character. Anyways here goes the questions: (these are based solely off of the 1E DMG descriptions)

Where did you get the idea for vecna? There is a Dr. Who episode called The Hand of Fear where a fossilized hand makes a lot of people behave badly. Was this the basis for the hand of vecna?

What came first, the hand or the eye? (Is that anything like the chicken and egg argument?) Obviously in game they came at the same time, but what was the first one written?

Ok, are the parts magical because they were all that was left to absorb vecna's essence, or did they survive because vecna made them "special" while he was alive? I know that the DMG says that the second one happened supposedly, but I thought I would ask anyways.

Looking at the descriptions (jewel eye, smaller remains, phantom roaming the prime material), it seems to me that Vecna could be considered a highly customised demilich. Or is he more or less than that?

Even the smallest details would be appreciated.



Aaron.

---

Geoffrey

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 05:40 AM

Why Lejendary instead of Legendary?

(I remember being taken in for a few moments by an April Fool's joke a couple years ago [I believe it was in the LA Web Community on [www.gygax.com](http://www.gygax.com)] in which you were reportedly gunned down, all because of the "J".) :eek:

---

sotterraneo

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 11:20 AM

Re: Re: Re: Re: Heh...

"Don't denigrate the position you have, amico. It is a great one IMO, and you get to relate to gamers a lot and likely play many games as part of your "work" too. An enviable position;)"

Oh, I like my job (hey, I have chosen it, not the other way around 8-]) but I understand that retailers have often not a very good 'press' in Internet sites and forums... 8-]

"I think it was ModCon99, as Alex was with me, had just turned 13 a week or so before we attended. As for looking different, well, that's what time does for you, eh? As for me, I'm just happy to be around still :eek:"

Was it 1999? Hmm, I starting to show my age...

"1) Well, when we were in Italy, Alex said: "The food here is great, all the gamers are friendly, and the girls are really pretty. We can move here anytime you want to, Dad.""

8-] Your son has a really good taste 8-P. About gamers being friendly, well, considering that D&D and AD&D were and are by far the most popular games in Italy (we could say that gamerdome is divided between the ones who like/love them and the ones who hate them with a 10:1 ratio at least) and you are the father of both, well, I was surprised in not seeing a biggest queue (when I went back to Brescia and started to tell amazed customers about your presence in Italy and showing your autographs I started listening "NOOOOO - why nobody told this to me?!? AARGH!" and of course "How much do you want for this module/Basic Set?". Nothing, of course, because I'll NEVER sell them. If you ever come to Italy and the news are better spread, expect a HUGE audience!

"So, is Alex has any input, I suspect the answer is a positive one. Fact is, though, I am very busy, and going to cons here in the US or overseas takes about two weeks out of my working time when all is said and done. Thus Trigea levies a hefty fee on my appearances. I hate travelling--although I love to be in new places--so I generally don't mind not going. The most likely scenario is in regards to the LA MMPO RPG. The developers, Dreams-Interactive, are in Europe. If all goes as planned, around 2004 we will be in beta test, and then I'll likely be needed over there--Belgium. Once I'm in Europe, well, I have a good friend in France, and I like Germany, Italy, and Spain, enjoy England too..."

I'll alert convention organizers for 2004 then.

"2) From the larger perspective Alessandro, the AD&D game was the best move TSR ever made. Sales jumped incredibly when it was released, and I do believe that even 3E has not met the volume that those original books attained--could be wrong there, but..."

Oops, sorry if I gave you the impression I was against the AD&D game - far from it! I'm not that kind of person who says "If I don't like it, then it's a bad thing". But...

"Anyway, I do agree with you that it was a mistake for TSR not to continue to support the D&D game line too. I urged that we do so, but that advice was ignored".

Sigh. They really shoot themselves in the foot, in Italy at least, because they destroyed an excellent 'recruiting' game. Oh, well...

"You are most welcome--I've had a great time creating and playing games, so the whole is mutual".

Mr. Gyax, I don't want to seem pushy or anything and I DO know you did a lot of these things in the past, but may I interview you for the Dungeons.it web site (I think the site's nature is clear?)? I understand you are - of course - a very busy person but if you ever had the time then I'd be most grateful.

Thanks!

"Ciao,  
Gary"

Hmmm, you don't know Italian, don't you?

Ciro Alessandro Sacco  
Brescia - Italy

---

MerricB

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 02:01 PM

G'day Gary!

Another question or two...

Looking at your D&D adventures, the term "challenging" comes to mind. An entirely good thing, of course! However, I'm wondering how often players would be losing their PCs in your D&D games?

What happened then? Did they start new characters at level 1, or were you kind to the poor players and give them other options?

:)

Apart from your own RPG designs, have you played many other RPGs?

Cheers & Thanks once more!

---

Zappo

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 03:01 PM

*You were at ModCon in '99?*

AAGH! \*bites his hands\* :eek:

I'd better be more informed in the future. :D

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 03:59 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by jester47*

**Gary,**

***I have to admit that I am very much a Vecna fan. I figure you might have an inside view of Vecnology and might be able to answer my questions.***

***[snippage]***

***Even the smallest details would be appreciated.***

***Aaron.***

---

Smallest detail indeed and perforce. Brian Blume was the creator of the Eye and Hand of Vecna, and nary a detail of those items did he ever reveal to me--beyond what appeared in print, I hasten to add:D

All I can say other than that is that some clever DM included the "Head of Vecna" in his adventure material, and at least two players instigated the demise of their characters attempting to take advantage of this marvelous opportunity to gain the greatest of powers. ROTFLMAO!

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 04:04 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Geoffrey*

***Why Lejendary instead of Legendary?***

***(I remember being taken in for a few moments by an April Fool's joke a couple years ago [I believe it was in the LA Web Community on [www.gygax.com](http://www.gygax.com)] in which you were reportedly gunned down, all because of the "J".) :eek:***

---

Marketing, of course. Without the "j" in it, the name is common, ordinary, easily forgotten, and quite unlikely to be trade-markable. With the "j" in it it is distinct, unusual, and remarked on often, thank you very much:)

Gary

---

jester47

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 04:10 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***Smallest detail indeed and perforce. Brian Blume was the creator of the Eye and Hand of Vecna, and nary a detail of those items did he ever reveal to me--beyond what appeared in print, I hasten to add:D***

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***Cheers,***  
***Gary***

---

DOH! Aaron gets out a pad of paper and a pen "Brian Blum, hunt down regarding Vecnology...."

Thanks for your time Gary!

Aaron.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 04:17 PM

Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Heh...

Quote:

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*Originally posted by sotterraneo*

***Oh, I like my job (hey, I have chosen it, not the other way around 8-J) but I understand that retailers have often not a very good 'press' in Internet sites and forums... 8-[***

---

Good retail outlets are a major part of gaming, are what keeps it alive. GW, for example, relies on their retail stores almost entirely for this purpose. PRG publishers should, and generally do, appreciate the key role retailers have in the whole field. I

Quote:

---

certainly appreciate them greatly!

**8-J Your son has a really good taste 8-P.**

---

About gamers being friendly, well, considering that D&D and AD&D were and are by far the most popular games in Italy (we could say that gamerdom is divided between the ones who like/love them and the ones who hate them with a 10:1 ratio at least) and you are the father of both, well, I was surprised in not seeing a biggest queue (when I went back to Brescia and started to tell amazed customers about your presence in Italy and showing your autographs I started listening "NOOOOO - why nobody told this to me?!? AARGH!" and of course "How much do you want for this module/Basic Set?". Nothing, of course, because I'll NEVER sell them. If you ever come to Italy and the news are better spread, expect a HUGE audience!

"So, is Alex has any input, I suspect the answer is a positive one. Fact is, though, I am very busy, and going to cons here in the US or overseas takes about two weeks out of my working time when all is said and done. Thus Trigea levies a hefty fee on my appearances. I hate travelling--although I love to be in new places--so I generally don't mind not going. The most likely scenario is in regards to the LA MMPO RPG. The developers, Dreams-Interactive, are in Europe. If all goes as planned, around 2004 we will be in beta test, and then I'll likely be needed over there--Belgium. Once I'm in Europe, well, I have a good friend in France, and I like Germany, Italy, and Spain, enjoy England too...".

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Sigh. They really shoot themselves in the feet, in Italy at least, because they destroyed an excellent 'recruiting' game. Oh, well...

"You are most welcome--I've had a great time creating and playing games, so the whole is mutual".

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Thanks!

"Ciao,  
Gary"

Hmmm, you don't know Italian, don't you?

Ciro Alessandro Sacco  
Brescia - Italy [/B]/[QUOTE]

---

angrypossum

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 04:22 PM

Dragons in the Basement

Hello Mr. Gyax,

Thanks for continuing this thread. I have two questions.

What do you know about the documentary Dragons in the Basement by Dave Arneson?

What was your profession before starting TSR?

-Josh

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 04:36 PM

Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Heh...

Pardon the gaff in my earlier, partial response. I hit send by accident. Now I'll finish what I meant to.

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by sotterraneo*

**8-J Your son has a really good taste 8-P.**

---

Heh, and his father agrees with him, as most likely would his two older brothers :D Italian cuisine is my favorite, although I confess to preferring premier grand cru class French wines (and their cheeses) to the Italian ones.

Quote:

---

***About gamers being friendly, well, considering that D&D and AD&D were and are by far the most popular games in Italy (we could say that gamerdom is divided between the ones who like/love them and the ones who hate them with a 10:1 ratio at least) and you are the father of both, well, I was surprised in not seeing a biggest queue (when I went back to Brescia and started to tell amazed customers about your presence in Italy and showing your autographs I started listening "NOOOOO - why nobody told this to me?!? AARGH!" and of course "How much do you want for this module/Basic Set?". Nothing, of course, because I'll NEVER sell them. If you ever come to Italy and the news are better spread, expect a HUGE audience!***

---

I met a number of non-D&Ders who were very nice, so I guess that not liking the game doesn't necessarily mean that its author is disliked :eek:  
And thanks for the heads-up on a possible return visit. I'll bring along extra pens :rolleyes:

Quote:

---

*Sigh. They really shoot themselves in the feet, in Italy at least, because they destroyed an excellent 'recruiting' game. Oh, well...*

---

That is so, and TSR did that again when 2E was published, for some 50% of their audience did not accept the new edition, There is an analogy to the "New Coke" release here, only TSR didn't rectify their marketing error by supporting both original and 2E versions of AD&D. That certainly led to the financial difficulties experienced in the years thereafter.

Quote:

---

*Mr. Gygax, I don't want to seem pushy or anything and I DO know you did a lot of these things in the past, but may I interview you for the Dungeons.it web site (I think the site's nature is clear?)? I understand you are - of course - a very busy person but if you ever had the time then I'd be most grateful.*

---

Email me at [gygax@genevaonline.com](mailto:gygax@genevaonline.com) about an interview, Alessandro.

[QUOTE][B]Hmmm, you don't know Italian, don't you?

No, I know only a few words, although I understand more because of the Latin base of many English words (and I have a large vocabulary of those words), and once I listen to Italian being spoken for a while I can follow a bit of what is being said. Also, I do know what "ciao" means :)

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 04:43 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by MerricB  
G'day Gary!*

*Another question or two...*

*Looking at your D&D adventures, the term "challenging" comes to mind. An entirely good thing, of course! However, I'm wondering how often players would be losing their PCs in your D&D games?*

*What happened then? Did they start new characters at level 1, or were you kind to the poor players and give them other options?*

*:)*

*Apart from your own RPG designs, have you played many other RPGs?*

*Cheers & Thanks once more!*

---

Well, my regulars learned to say "Run away!" pretty quickly. Even the best came to a fatal situation with their main PCs now and again. That's what high level clerics and wish spells are for, of course. The compliment was returned when I played.

Most of the regulars had several OCs, and the secondary and below ones were more expendable. Some were allowed to end their careers just to allow the creation of new low-level PCs for fresh approaches to like adventures. Seldom did I allow non-regulars to start above 2nd level. Regulars could start new PCs at 3rd or 4th level, as they clearly had experience to manage such characters.

Personally, unless the group demanded a "jump-started character," I enjoyed playing a new PC from 1st level on.

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 04:50 PM

Blast! Messed up again. Bad morning...

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by MerricB*

*Apart from your own RPG designs, have you played many other RPGs?*

*Cheers & Thanks once more!*

---

Quick list:

EN GARDE, BOOT HILL, METAMORPHOSIS ALPHA, STAR FRONTIERS, TOP SECRET, GANGBUSTERS. TRAVELLER, GAMMA WORLD, PARANOIA CALL OF CHTHULLU.

There'd be more, but time and lack of proximate GMs has kept it fairly short.

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 04:52 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Zappo*  
**You were at ModCon in '99?**

**AAGH! "bites his hands" :eek:**

**I'd better be more informed in the future. :D**

---

Hush! Don't tell the guys who run ModCon. They're a great bunch, and I don't want them to learn that had they publicized my appearance back in 99 a bit more they'd have had an even larger attendance than they did ;)

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 05:01 PM

Re: Dragons in the Basement

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by angrypossum*  
**Hello Mr. Gygax,**

**Thanks for continuing this thread. I have two questions.**

**What do you know about the documentary Dragons in the Basement by Dave Arneson?**

**What was your profession before starting TSR?**

**-Josh**

---

I don't think I ever saw the documentary you name, although I did do an interview for a chap what was working with Dave, the producer of the work, as I recall.

As to my work before I became a full-time game geek, well, mainly insurance. (A lot of part-time jobs and even full-time ones of short duration when I was a teenager.) I was in the insurance field for about 13 years and was a supervising underwriter for various forms of health, special risk, and life insurance until late in 1970. I then decided to roll the dice. to support the family while earning very little in gaming I learned to be a cobbler, and did that for four years until becoming a full-time employee of TSR.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Sir Edgar

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 05:20 PM

I wanted to ask you a few more questions.

How do begin your creation process? Do you take notes while you're reading a book or after watching a movie? Or do you go straight to the computer (or typewriter) and start typing? Do you have a schedule for how many hours a day you commit to work or does it just come all at once? How do you avoid crossing the line between inspiration and plagiarism?

Thanks very much for all of your great replies. I'm still amazed at how responsive you've been here.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 06:53 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Sir Edgar*  
**I wanted to ask you a few more questions.**

**How do begin your creation process? Do you take notes while you're reading a book or after watching a movie? Or do you go straight to the computer (or typewriter) and start typing? Do you have a schedule for how many hours a day you commit to work or does it just come all at once? How do you avoid crossing the line between inspiration and plagiarism?**

**Thanks very much for all of your great replies. I'm still amazed at how responsive you've been here.**

---

Hail SirE!

Inspiration comes when and where it comes. Sometimes in the shower, maybe when reading to viewing something, most often when I sit down and contemplate. Thus, notes can be input to a computer file, written on a pad, or scratched hastily on a bit of scrap paper.

When I am involved in a project I usually work about six to 10 hours a day on it, seven per, save Sundays during football season. The balance of the day's work time (10-12 hours standard) is spend managing business, email, and board posts such as this... :eek:

Plagerism involves copying another author's work, and that I have never done. In writing articles, one must needs to make clear the sources of direct quotes, of course. Ideas are not copyrightable--or else there's be only one RPG today. As a matter of fact, there are no really new ideas around at all, but rather we have recombinations and new approaches to old ideas, and that too is creative and innovative. When someone looks

for the roots of the PRG, then need only harken to "Let's Pretend" and games such as "Cops & Robbers" to find them :D

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

## The\_Gneech

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 09:07 PM

Heya! :) I originally posted this question in [this](#) thread and got some very interesting responses, but I figure there's probably not a better person to ask, so:

Is there a mythic/folklore precedent for the drow? I know of sidhe, seelie, and unseelie fae folk; I have also encountered the terms "drugh" and "trow." None of them have a clear correlation to the *D&D* drow, nor have I seen a readily-identifiable source or set of sources for them the way, say, "dwarves" have. So were there drow before the days of *D&D*?

-The Gneech

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Geoffrey

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 10:51 PM

Gary, it is a privilege to have the Master of the Game be so generous with his time and insights. Thank you very much for making this thread possible.

I have two questions:

1. My favorite modules are your D trilogy. In the random encounter tables, ghosts and ghouls show up quite a bit. Since these creatures are once-humans, why is there such a great population of them in these heretofore-undiscovered-by-man caverns? (Also, did you ever develop the other encounter areas on the large-scale [1 hex=1 mile] map included with these modules?)
2. If you could travel back in time to the early 1970s, would you still make it that clerics can turn undead? I ask because of these words you wrote on page 101 of the original version of Necropolis:

'Priests and Priestesses have no extraordinary ability to affect the Netherrealms creatures and beings, spirits, Unliving, Undead, and Unalive in this game system. There will be no mumbled prayer followed by a "Vaporize!" or "Shoo!" removing dangers such as these foes in this tomb! Naturally, clerical personas wield many instruments which are amongst the Susceptibilities of these sorts of creatures and beings, but there are no givens ("gimmies") here. Be sure to keep this in mind--and to gently remind players of this too, if they are veterans of game systems which make this sort of fell minions of Evil lightweights to be brushed aside with the wave of a sacred object.'

Thank you once again for your kindness and generosity!

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 11:02 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by The\_Gneech*

**Heya! :) I originally posted this question in [this](#) thread and got some very interesting responses, but I figure there's probably not a better person to ask, so:**

**Is there a mythic/folklore precedent for the drow? I know of sidhe, seelie, and unseelie fae folk; I have also encountered the terms "drugh" and "trow." None of them have a clear correlation to the D&D drow, nor have I seen a readily-identifiable source or set of sources for them the way, say, "dwarves" have. So were there drow before the days of D&D?**

**-The Gneech**

Hola!

An easy answer. I saw the reference in an unexpurgated dictionary, "dark elf." From that I made up the whole of the drow race as the main antagonists for the vasty underdark:)

Cherio,  
Gary

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 16th September, 2002, 11:16 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Geoffrey*

**Gary, it is a privilege to have the Master of the Game be so generous with his time and insights. Thank you very much for making this thread possible.**

**I have two questions:**

1. My favorite modules are your D trilogy. In the random encounter tables, ghosts and ghouls show up quite a bit. Since these creatures are once-humans, why is there such a great population of them in these heretofore-undiscovered-by-man caverns? (Also, did you ever develop the other encounter areas on the large-scale [1 hex=1 mile] map included with these modules?)
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*Thank you once again for your kindness and generosity!*

---

Hi Geoffrey,

Welscome once again. As long as there are questions and I have some spare time, I'm delighted to be able to be of such service.

1. Once-human tells the tale. The underdark is not strange to the vile undead creatures you name. Of course HPL had much the same view ;) The lightless world there seemed to me a likely place for such creatures and also likely to have supplies of food.

As for other large-scale maps, I was tinkering with some, developing ideas for more adventures in the depths, but none of my players, and that includes the most able with very potent PCs much cared to explore there, so I scrapped the plan. Can't say if any of the sketch maps atill exist, as so much was lost in my leaving T\$R, and in the many moves before then and thereafter I have made.

2. So many of the very most interesting "monsters" were subjected to that rude capacity of turning/destroying that I initially bestowed upon the cleric class that I did indeed come to rue the initial benison given to that class. My plan for a revised edition of AD&D was such as to limit that power somewhat while adjusting things for the capacity of undead to withstand "turning" so as to make things more challenging for PCs without emasculating the power of the cleric. Alas, that was not to be in AD&D terms, so I did things differently in the DJ system, as you note, and have continued that fine tradition now in the LA RPG :D

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

jester47

Tuesday, 17th September, 2002, 06:47 AM

Hello again Gary, I have returned to puzzle you once more!

yeahright!

You mentioned above that Brian B. was the creator of Vecna. Do you know if there is any way to contact him, if he would mind being contacted and if so how I should contact him?

And for your time I guess I should feed the dragon:

Here's one-

There once was a jeweler named Hasan. One night five of Ali Baba's men broke into Hasan's shop and stole some diamonds. They entered the shop one at a time. The first thief took half the diamonds, and then began to leave. He changed his mind and decided to take another. The second took half of what was left plus another. The third did the same. As did the fourth. When the fifth entered the shop he did so to discover that there were no diamonds left. How many diamonds did Hasan have in his shop?

Enjoy!

Aaron.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 17th September, 2002, 02:05 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by jester47*

***Hello again Gary, I have returned to puzzle you once more!***

***yeahright!***

***You mentioned above that Brian B. was the creator of Vecna. Do you know if there is any way to contact him, if he would mind being contacted and if so how I should contact him?***

***And for your time I guess I should feed the dragon:***

***Here's one-***

***There once was a jeweler named Hasan. One night five of Ali Baba's men broke into Hasan's shop and stole some diamonds. They entered the shop one at a time. The first thief took half the diamonds, and then began to leave. He changed his mind and decided to take another. The second took half of what was left plus another. The third did the same. As did the fourth. When the fifth entered the shop he did so to discover that there were no diamonds left. How many diamonds did Hasan have in his shop?***

***Enjoy!***

***Aaron.***

---

As for Brian Blume, it will probably not come as a surprise to learn that I do not have any truck with that individual. When he sees me he heads the opposite direction with some alacrity. He lives here in Lake Geneva. Last I heard he was employed making tools and dies. From there it's up to you. I have no addy info.

Now as to diamonds, is that "Took another" another diamond or another half of the remaining stones? If the "another" is a single stone, we can't be dealing with halves, of course, as there would be odd numbers involved...

Cheerio,  
Gary



Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

---

***As for Brian Blume, it will probably not come as a surprise to learn that I do not have any truck with that individual. When he sees me he heads the opposite direction with some alacrity. He lives here in Lake Geneva. Last I heard he was employed making tools and dies. From there it's up to you. I have no addy info.***

---

I was kind of surprised to hear that you didn't create Vecna, considering that he's one of the most obviously Moorcock-inspired parts of early D&D.

I was curious, though: what direction were you headed with the original Greyhawk? I'm assuming Gord was supposed to be an incarnation of the eternal champion (or something similar), and Mordenkainen's ethically neutral stance also seems similar to what you'd expect from one of Moorcock's characters.

Did you intend Oerth to be part of the Multiverse, or a different, similar construct? I guess my questions could be answered by reading your Gord books, but I've only been able to track down the third, so I wanted to hold off reading that one until I could find the other two. :)

Quote:

---

***Now as to diamonds, is that "Took another" another diamond or another half of the remaining stones? If the "another" is a single stone, we can't be dealing with halves, of course, as there would be odd numbers involved...***

***Cheerio,  
Gary***

---

Maybe the thief was also a gemcutter?

---

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 17th September, 2002, 02:53 PM

Hi derverdamnte...

As I based the Gord yarns directly upon gaming, the cosmos was inteed one of infinite size and alternate worlds. a multiverse. Other than that, though, I don't believe that there are parallels to Moorcock, much as I enjoy his writing. Gord was not "eternal," in that he was born and at some point die.

The series has been OOP for a long time, but it's likely you can findthe six books you need to complete the set on Ebay. I'm not supposed to talk about it, but we do have a deal for the series in graphic novel form, full color interior illos, and the story as written, with text in full where pictures are not supplied. The first installment of the first novel will likely hit in mid-2003, a few months delayed from original projected release. I'm relating all this, because if the graphic novels prove a success, the regular ones will likely then be reprinted, initially in hardback version.

Now, if the thieves are also gemcutters, then what of the chips left brom cleaving a stone? Those would have to be even in number :D

Ciao,  
Gary

---

derverdamnte

Tuesday, 17th September, 2002, 03:14 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh  
Hi derverdamnte...*

---

***As I based the Gord yarns directly upon gaming, the cosmos was inteed one of infinite size and alternate worlds. a multiverse. Other than that, though, I don't believe that there are parallels to Moorcock, much as I enjoy his writing. Gord was not "eternal," in that he was born and at some point die.***

---

Ah, okay. I was thinking in terms of his being champion of the balance, and at some point (so I've been told) acquiring a black sword, since those are a couple of the archetypal components of being the eternal champion.

By the way, didn't you write a Moorcock pastiche at some point? I heard about it, but I never found out where it was published or collected.

Quote:

---

***The series has been OOP for a long time, but it's likely you can findthe six books you need to complete the set on Ebay.***

---

SIX books? Yikes! The other three must come after the book I have ("Dance of Demons," I think it's called).

Quote:

---

***I'm not supposed to talk about it, but we do have a deal for the series in graphic novel form, full color interior illos, and the story as written, with text in full where pictures are not supplied. The first installment of the first novel will likely hit in mid-2003, a few months delayed from original projected release. I'm relating all this, because if the graphic novels prove a success, the regular ones will likely then be reprinted, initially in hardback version.***

---

That sounds seriously cool. I'll have to keep an eye out for it.

Quote:

---

***Now, if the thieves are also gemcutters, then what of the chips left from cleaving a stone? Those would have to be even in number :D***

---

I don't know...maybe the thief decided counting gem chips was too much of a problem and swept them under the rug. That's what I'd do. :cool:

---

Remathilis

Tuesday, 17th September, 2002, 03:38 PM

Hi, I just joined not too long ago (having been a poster at WotC's boards) but wanted to get a few questions answered. :)

- 1.) What was up with the Unearthed Arcana Cavalier class? Negative XP? Stat Increases? Why?
- 2.) What is your favorite D&D monster, either to throw at PCs or in general?
- 3.) Have you seen any of the "Return to" series of modules from 1999 (I think)? What was your opinion of the re-makes of the Temple of Elemental Evil, Tomb of Horrors, Keep on the Borderland, and Against the Giants?
- 4.) Lastly, (and forgive me if you've answered this) if there is one rule/concept you would change in AD&D 1st edition after the fact, what would it be?

Thanks,

Remathilis

---

jester47

Tuesday, 17th September, 2002, 04:22 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***Now as to diamonds, is that "Took another" another diamond or another half of the remaining stones? If the "another" is a single stone, we can't be dealing with halves, of course, as there would be odd numbers involved...***

***Cheerio,  
Gary***

---

Ah, that would be half +1 diamonds!

Aaron.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 17th September, 2002, 04:22 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by derverdammte*

***Ah, okay. I was thinking in terms of his being champion of the balance, and at some point (so I've been told) acquiring a black sword, since those are a couple of the archetypal components of being the eternal champion.***

---

Michael did pretty well establish the "Eternal Champion" in that model, but the concept of the magic sword predates Elric by a few centuries, eh? ;)

The cosmology of Oerth has nine alignments as well, not the three that Moorcock set--and more or less like that of the original D&D too...

I'm not sure that the eternal champion is actually an archetype, but it is an interesting concept for sure, a sort of superarchetype in the mold of the mythological demigods.

Quote:

---

***By the way, didn't you write a Moorcock pastiche at some point? I heard about it, but I never found out where it was published or collected.***

---

Yes, I wrote a tale in which Gord and Moorcock's Simon teamed up to bring disaster to some contemporary demon worshippers. It was in a paperback anthology titled THE ETERNAL CHAMPION, as I recall.

Quote:

---

***SIX books? Yikes! The other three must come after the book I have ("Dance of Demons," I think it's called).***

***That sounds seriously cool. I'll have to keep an eye out for it.***

---

In order of reading the titles are:

SAGA OF OLD CITY  
ARTIFACT OF EVIL  
CITY OF HAWKS  
NIGHT ARRANT  
SEA OF DEATH  
DANCE OF DEMONS  
COME ENDLESS DARKNESS

The artwork I have so far seen is really terrific, and I am very anxious to have a look at the work when it begins publication. It will be like rading someone else's yarns, which from my standpoint is great:D

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 17th September, 2002, 04:42 PM

Happy to have you join the thread.

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Remathilis*

***Hi, I just joined no to long ago (having been a poster at WotC's boards) but wanted to get a few questions answered. :)***

***1.) What was up with the Unearthed Arcana Cavalier class? Negative XP? Stat Increases? Why?***

---

As is said by attornies, the dicument says what it says... Seriously, the class was "right" for the OAD&D game as I envisioned it, and once one got a cavalier class PC, they were very capable in adventuring. This is not to say that some change was not needed, but only some fair period of playing time could determine that. UA was published about a year before I was planned, as TSR was in financial trouble and needed a "seller".

Quote:

---

***2.) What is your favorite D&D monster, either to throw at PCs or in general?***

---

Ah, that's impossible for me to answer. Circumstances alter cases. I can wreak havoc with kobolds if the PC party is of low level. Terry Kuntz's beholder is always a fun critter to bring into play. A black pudding in the right place or a small dragon can work wonders in discomfiting the plans of a PC party. Then again a trecherous NPC tends to be amusing... :eek:

Not always using a set of stock monsters is a key to interesting and exciting adventures for sure.

Quote:

---

***3.) Have you seen any of the "Return to" series of modules from 1999 (I think)? What was your opinion of the re-makes of the Temple of Elemental Evil, Tomb of Horrors, Keep on the Borderland, and Against the Giants?***

---

Other than the RttToH which I read in ms. form and then wrote a forward to, no. I have run a LEJENDARY ADVENTURE game campaign for about seven years now, so most of my GMing has been in that system--or in original D&D or AD&D at cons and for special occassions. There is little time from work for me to play, or even read other RPG material, save when needed for work. As I've said frequently, when I retire I plan to spend some 40 hours a week playing games, not writing them:D

Quote:

---

***4.) Lastly, (and forgive me if you've answered this) if there is one rule/concept you would change in AD&D 1st edition after the fact, what would it be?***

***Thanks,***

***Remathilis***

---

Yes! First, I'd remove the psionics material, possibly adding it back in later on, having been able to spend more time and being very careful to see that it meshed better with the magic system in the game.

Next, I'd drop the weapon speed and weapon vs. armor material, as those are seldom used and generally slow and complicate play. Those considerations could be picked up in a special "duelling" supplement or the like.

BTW, when I am DMing AD&D, I tend to ignore rules that get in the wat of the flow of the game. When I have said so before an audience, there have always been some audience members who expressed shock, not to say horror and disbelief. I aon't a rules lawyer, and I believe my own advice--ignore and change as the DM sees fit to make the players' involvement intense and the game be a compelling experience ;)

Cheers,  
Gary

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

diaglo

Tuesday, 17th September, 2002, 05:01 PM

A simple plea :D

do you ever plan to attend DragonCon in Atlanta?

and if you do, could you run a session of Original D&D for some of us die-hards?

---

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 17th September, 2002, 05:21 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by diaglo*  
**A simple plea: :D**

**do you ever plan to attend DragonCon in Atlanta?**

**and if you do, could you run a session of Original D&D for some of us die-hards?**

---

Haven't been to a DragonCon in years, and they are good shows too....

I will be at CoastCon in Biloxi this March. Chris Clark and I are heading down there as guests. If you can make it there I'd be happy to haul along my AD&D materials, run an adventure ofr six or eight players ;)

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Breakdaddy

Tuesday, 17th September, 2002, 05:26 PM

Hi Gary!

I've heard the game Hackmaster likened to the original AD&D in terms of grit and feel. As a player of the original AD&D I would love to recapture the wonder of playing the original AD&D, but with no new supplements and little time for conversion, I was wondering if you've any insight as to whether the Hackmaster game truly delivers some semblance of the original "feel" of AD&D?

---

diaglo

Tuesday, 17th September, 2002, 05:34 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Breakdaddy*  
**Hi Gary!**

**I've heard the game Hackmaster likened to the original AD&D in terms of grit and feel. As a player of the original AD&D I would love to recapture the wonder of playing the original AD&D, but with no new supplements and little time for conversion, I was wondering if you've any insight as to whether the Hackmaster game truly delivers some semblance of the original "feel" of AD&D?**

---

KenzerCo purchased the rights to 1ed and 2ed Adnd so they could produce Hackmaster.

try their website at [www.kenzerco.com](http://www.kenzerco.com)

Although it is a parody, Gary Jackson did a wonderful job maintaining the "feel". It is a very playable system.

---

diaglo

Tuesday, 17th September, 2002, 05:41 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*  
**I will be at CoastCon in Biloxi this March. Chris Clark and I are heading down there as guests. If you can make it there I'd be happy to haul along my AD&D materials, run an adventure ofr six or eight players ;)**

**Cheerio,  
Gary**

---

thanks. don't worry about hauling your stuff down. i have a few too many copies of my own i can bring. i'll see if i can get my group to make the roadtrip.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 17th September, 2002, 06:08 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Breakdaddy*  
**Hi Gary!**

**I've heard the game Hackmaster likened to the original AD&D in terms of grit and feel. As a player of the original AD&D I would love to recapture the wonder of playing the original AD&D, but with no new supplements and little time for conversion, I was wondering if you've any insight as to whether the Hackmaster game truly delivers some semblance of the original "feel" of AD&D?**

---

What diaglo says above in response to your query is on target. HACKMASTER is different from OAD&D but close--some new material and all that you can easilt manage or ignore.

Ciao,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 17th September, 2002, 06:11 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by diaglo*

***thanks. don't worry about hauling your stuff down. i have a few too many copies of my own i can bring. i'll see if i can get my group to make the roadtrip.***

Okay, and drop me an email if you do plan to come. I'll need adventure material for AD&D, of course--outdoor action or dungeon crawl?

Gary

---

diaglo

Tuesday, 17th September, 2002, 06:53 PM

city based, dungeon crawl if you please.

i love the sewers. :D

▼ Page 14 of 36   ◀◀ First   ◀ ...   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11   12   13   14   15   16   17   18   19   20   21   22   23   24   ...   ▶ Last   ▶▶   [Show 20 post\(s\) from this thread on one page](#)

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## Q&amp;A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Page 15 of 36    &lt;&lt; First    ...    5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 ...    Last &gt;&gt;    Show 20 post(s) from this thread on one page

Welverin

Tuesday, 17th September, 2002, 08:53 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh****When I am involved in a project I usually work about six to 10 hours a day on it, seven per, save Sundays during football season.***

Packers fan or did you end up liking another team?

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 17th September, 2002, 09:12 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Welverin****Packers fan or did you end up liking another team?***

Da BEARS!!! They've actually played two halves (both first halves were pathetic) and lucked out both games, so...2 and 0 baby!

That's because I was born in Chicago about four blocks from Wrigly Field--the Bears played there back in those days... Because my maternal family has been in Lake Geneva since c. 1836, I don't hate the Packers. Fact is, I'll root for them if it doesn't affect the Bears' chances for winning. Back when Bart Starr was QBing the Pack, I often watched their games in preference to Chicago--what a traitor I am.

A friend gave the motivational speech to the Bears a few years back, so I went with him up to Lambeau Field. ate breakfast with the team. then watched them get their asses handed to 'em:( Even though I was decked out in all sorts of Bears' stuff, the Packer fans were really pretty gracious, so I didn't have to slink out of the stadium... :D

One last thinh: Back when the Bears won the championship, better believe I made a LOT of money on bets with die-hard Packer fans :eek:

Cheerio,  
Gary

Archade

Wednesday, 18th September, 2002, 12:29 AM

Gaming!

Hi Gary,

Firstly, I'd like to thank you for introducing me to Jack Vance's work ... his use of the english language and the fantasy store is original, challenging to the reader, and rich with texture!

Secondly, I have a generic gaming question for you. I've had a number of campaigns over the years, and I find as a DM/GM/etc once the story is up and running, it's simple to keep the ongoing soap opera going. However, starting, or working towards a grand finale, is ever a challenge for me.

As a Storyteller (DM/GM/etc), how do you put your adventures and campaigns to paper, plan (or improvise) such things, and all in all, can you give some insight to your many years as a game-running-guru in this regard?

Thanks!  
Archade

MerricB

Wednesday, 18th September, 2002, 01:05 AM

G'day, Gary!

A few more questions on early D&amp;D:

The Thief &amp; the Assassin...

Were they played much as PCs in your games?

If you can remember, who played the first Thief? (I notice that it's not introduced until the Greyhawk supplement).

And how common were demi-human PCs, with the vast restrictions on them seemingly working against playing them in the longer term? ;)

Again, thanks muchly for your time and patience!

Cheers!

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***It is dawning on me that I could well spend my declining years pleasantly engaged in answering posts here...***

I think it is safe to say that you shall never decline. Your devotion to the crafting of make-believe and entertainment; combined with your willingness to be involved at the grass roots level, ie. here, pretty much assures your immortality.

Having said that, LONG LIVE GYGAX! :D

I'd just like to say that my respect for you has grown considerably over the last year or so. Being completely chaotic neutral (it's a description of my personality that just happens to be exceptionally accurate, I don't fit it, it fits me), I of course railed against the fanboys and set about to bring down the heirarchy of worshipers. What can I say? It's in my nature to go against the popular flow.

But after reading through a lot of material that you had written (mainly a lot of Greyhawk stuff) and having seen you engage in such helpful and constructive enterprises as this Q&A, I couldn't help but re-evaluate my stance.

You're a credit to creativity and I thank you for all the work you've done over the years that has inspired and entertained me. I only hope that one day I can attain even a fraction of your genius (any chance of a piece of DNA? :D ).

---

Hikaru

Wednesday, 18th September, 2002, 04:42 AM

D&D cartoon & nostalgia

Any hope to ever see a sequel to the ol' D&D cartoon?

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 18th September, 2002, 03:28 PM

Re: Gaming!

Quote:

*Originally posted by Archade*

***Hi Gary,***

***Firstly, I'd like to thank you for introducing me to Jack Vance's work ... his use of the english language and the fantasy store is original, challenging to the reader, and rich with texture!***

You are most welcome. How I do agree! I can read and re-rad Vance as no other author. His characters are so clecverly developed with few descriptive passages, their personalities coming forth from their dialog--and what dialog. I think Keith Lauramer in his "Retiff" yarns comes close in that regard, albeit he is dealing with his subjects in a humorous vein, by ald large.

Quote:

*[B]Secondly, I have a generic gaming question for you. I've had a number of campaigns over the years, and I find as a DM/GM/etc once the story is up and running, it's simple to keep the ongoing soap opera going. However, starting, or working towards a grand finale, is ever a challenge for me.*

*As a Storyteller (DM/GM/etc), how do you put your adventures and campaigns to paper, plan (or improvise) such things, and all in all, can you give some insight to your many years as a game-running-guru in this regard?*

*[/B]*

Sure, and first of all, I don't ever think of myself as a "storyteller." that role is fulfilled in the course of play through the combination of the GM and the players, each doing their part to develop and bring to fruition, the basic outline of the episode--that part being the work of the GM, of course.

BNEginning a new adventure thread is often difficult when play sessions are frequent and intensive. Currently we play once a week only, so I have plenty of time for conceiving new material. If I am lazy I can always grab an adventure module ;) When we played several times a week, and the groups were different, I would often allow in-game discourse between PCs to develop a plaot and direct the general direction of things. Not surprisingly, the players often know pretty well what sort of adventure they would enjoy, so by listening and creating by the seat of one's pants can work wonders...or at least squeek by with something that's mildly entertaining to the group.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 18th September, 2002, 03:42 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by MerricB*

***G'day, Gary!***

***A few more questions on early D&D:***

***The Thief & the Assassin...***

***Were they played much as PCs in your games?***

*If you can remember, who played the first Thief? (I notice that it's not introduced until the Greyhawk supplement).*

*And how common were demi-human PCs, with the vast restrictions on them seemingly working against playing them in the longer term? ;)*

*Again, thanks muchly for your time and patience!*

*Cheers!*

---

Whoa! Recalling many details from late 1974 on ain't likely. My campaign players were the testers of all the new ideas, so the thief and assassin were played by me as NPCs in the middle of the year, 1974, as I began to compile material for a supplement to the D&D game. The thief was immediately popular, so quite a number were played before GREYHAWK hit in 1975. One or two assassin PCs were played also, but the party was always chary about them. Minor pilfering of party treasure was tolerated, but having a PC offed by an assassin was most annoying. That happened once, maybe twice, with the offending PC then leaving the game, the player returning as a different character.

As for demi-humans, they were always played extensively from day one. All sorts of dwarf, elf, and hobbit (later halfling) PCs--later on gnome and half-orc too. Fact is I once had a (short-lived) half-orc cleric-assassin PC :eek: Seems his adventure mates weren't sorry to see him offed.

I still have the dwarf character, Zigbie, who is topped off in level-- and that's with all the OAD&D (with UA) additions to what level can be attained--but now and then shows up in play.

All the players opting to play demi-human PCs knew the limitations, accepted them, and had great fun playing the role chosen. After all, the game doesn't have to be about power, eh?

In my opinion, in a world setting where humans are dominant, there is logic for setting level limits on non-human PCs. That's a whole other discussion though ;)

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 18th September, 2002, 04:01 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Fourecks*

***I think it is safe to say that you shall never decline. Your devotion to the crafting of make-believe and entertainment; combined with your willingness to be involved at the grass roots level, ie. here, pretty much assures your immortality.***

***Having said that, LONG LIVE GYGAX! :D***

---

Aw quit! You're making me blush :rolleyes: Fact is that I really do consider myself as a gamer like y'all here.

Quote:

---

***I'd just like to say that my respect for you has grown considerably over the last year or so. Being completely chaotic neutral (it's a description of my personality that just happens to be exceptionally accurate, I don't fit it, it fits me), I of course railed against the fanboys and set about to bring down the heirarchy of worshipers. What can I say? It's in my nature to go against the popular flow.***

---

Heh, and that's a pretty normal thing, and not likely to put you into the ranks of the bad guys. Fact is that a number of decent gamers just don't like my work. I understand that well, as I am not a fan of many a creative thing that lots of people think simply marvelous. No biggie. Sort of like preferring single malt Scotch whiskey to Canadian or bourbon, etc. Who gets their undies in a bunch over that sort of thing?

Quote:

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***But after reading through a lot of material that you had written (mainly a lot of Greyhawk stuff) and having seen you engage in such helpful and constructive enterprises as this Q&A, I couldn't help but re-evaluate my stance.***

---

Well, just don't get all muchie now, hear? ;)

Quote:

---

***You're a credit to creativity and I thank you for all the work you've done over the years that has inspired and entertained me. I only hope that one day I can attain even a fraction of your genius (any chance of a piece of DNA? :D ).***

---

Thankee kindly! I have a lot of fun doing what I do, so it isn't exactly a sacrifice when I spend so much time having at it, if you will. What I do miss is gaming as much as I once was able to do--before becoming a "pro" and when I was directing things at TSR and getting to play-test many a design. Thus the quip about retiring to play games once again. Which reminds me to add that I'll go to cons incognito so as to be able to play undisturbed. Quick story:

Back in the late 1970s I was at a Detroit MEtro Gamers con. got invited to slip off to the basement of the facility to join a Napoleonic miniatures battle, and I went off with alacrity. As I was playing (the Russians on the left wing of an Austro-Russian army opposing the French), an RPGer came down, spotted me, and exclaimed in surprise that he didn't know that I was into military miniatures. I laughed silently, for the boardgamers wuse to berate me for becoming a miniatures player, then those buffs for going to fantasy, when the truth was and is that I didn't abandon any of those game forms, just expanded my horizons.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---



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Quote:

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*Originally posted by Hikaru****Any hope to ever see a sequel to the ol' D&D cartoon?***

---

Too late! You've pulled the wrong lever, and the pit of another sad tale yawns beneath your feet...

I got forced out to California to run what was then TSR Entertainment. That name I changed to "Dungeons & Dragons Entertainment Corporation" because having dealt with the boys back in LAke Geneva, the name "TSR" conjured a most unfortunate image in the minds of those out on the West Coast who ran things in TV and movies.

So it was an expensive proposition, maintaining offices out there, for it takes at least a year for an outsider to be considered potentially suitable for insider status, even with a cartoon show running on TV, a major net then, CBS. So I fought the good fight, was finally getting somewhere when "doping lunch" and "taking a meeting" out in LA.

Although the third season of the D&D Cartoon Show saw only five new episodes, we were working on a major motion picture project that was making great progress towards getting into pre-production stage, in serious discussion for a game show and best of all we had cut a verbal deal for a cartoon show spin-off.

Gail saw to it that Judy Price from CBS and Margaret Loesch and Hank Sayoran from Marvel Entertainment had a comfortable meeting at our location, with white wine and cold shrimp for the evening break. Meantime I pitched my concept of a more adult-oriented spin-off of the show, sans Bobby the Barbarian and Uni--those two remaining back on earth when the Call to Adventure sounded again for the other Heroes. After a meeting that lasted about six hours, we took the lot down to Beverly Hills to a good Italian restaurant for a late supper--it was about 10 PM by then. None of the three had ever dined in BH before, even though they lived over in the Valley. The supper went as well as the meeting. and we [parted after midnight.

In a couple of days time we got word that it was a go, CBS was eager to move forward. Soon thereafter Marvel sent me the first script for the new series, and told me two more had been assigned to writers. The opening show was great, the "kids" were no longer reliant on hoaky magic items, had skills and their own abilities in the main.

Of course the TSR financial crisis of 1984 then occurred, so I had to hasten back to Lake Geneva. That put all projects on hold. Then I lost the stock fight. When it was learned that I was no longer involved, that ended the new cartoon series, and the other projects too. What a wretched result:(

Gary

---

## Archade

Wednesday, 18th September, 2002, 06:06 PM

---

Interesting...

So, O Great Sage, you are telling me basically the art of a good DM is "wing that mother"? Good to know I've been doing it right all along...

Here's a question for you. Obviously the current state of the halfling is a long running issue, as is indicated from early dragon magazines til today. Can you (legally) discuss the evolution from the hobbit to the halfling of at least AD&D, and your speculation of the current status of the hobbit?

Personally, I think the halflings of today more resemble the Kender from the Dragonlance fiction, or those wacky little guys from the movie Willow, far more than anyone living at Bag End. Anything you can share here?

Archade

---

## Hikaru

Wednesday, 18th September, 2002, 06:10 PM

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Re: Re: D&D cartoon & nostalgia

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Quote:

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*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh****Too late! You've pulled the wrong lever, and the pit of another sad tale yawns beneath your feet...***

---

Don't... I get a save vs. traps? :(

---

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh* ***Meantime I pitched my concept of a more adult-oriented spin-off of the show, sans Bobby the Barbarian and Uni--those two remaining back on earth when the Call to Adventure sounded again for the other Heroes.***

---

I have seen adult-oriented anime (Japanese cartoons, and no I am not refering specifically to the hentai sort) but in the US, the great majority of cartoons seem to be aimed at kids. Those cartoons who are not are usually erotic ones; I cannot remember any real American adult-themed non-erotic cartoon. When/where would yours have been aired?

---

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh* ***In a couple of days time we got word that it was a go, CBS was eager to move forward. Soon thereafter Marvel sent me the first script for the new series,***

---

CAN I SEE IT?!!! :eek:

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh* **Of course the TSR financial crisis of 1984 then occurred, so I had to hasten back to Lake Geneva. That put all projects on hold. Then I lost the stock fight. When it was learned that I was no longer involved, that ended the new cartoon series, and the other projects too. What a wretched result:(**

---

Now THAT's a bad script. The start was promising but the ending is a mess. Please rewrite it NOW. :(

Who's got the rights on the series, now? Hasbro? Marvel?

---

MerricB

Wednesday, 18th September, 2002, 06:19 PM

G'day, Gary!

Glad to hear that thieves & demi-humans have always been popular. (Hang on a moment, am I glad about the thieves? :))

And once again, thank you muchly for your time spent answering our questions.

What project that you're working on or have recently completed that you're currently most excited about?

Cheers!

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 18th September, 2002, 07:48 PM

Re: Interesting...

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Archade*  
**So, O Great Sage, you are telling me basically the art of a good DM is "wing that mother"? Good to know I've been doing it right all along...**

**Here's a question for you. Obviously the current state of the halfling is a long running issue, as is indicated from early dragon magazines til today. Can you (legally) discuss the evolution from the hobbit to the halfling of at least AD&D, and your speculation of the current status of the hobbit?**

**Personally, I think the halflings of today more resemble the Kender from the Dragonlance fiction, or those wacky little guys from the movie Willow, far more than anyone living at Bag End. Anything you can share here?**

**Archade**

---

When I included "hobbits" in the D&D game it was to attract the many JRRT fans, of course. Note I couldn't resist punning when I did something like "While this race has small place in the game..."

Anyway, when the Saul Zaentz Division of Elan Merchandizing came down on TSR about it, the only difference was the name change, "halfling" replacing the old English "hobbit." To get even, I then divided hobbits into separate sub-species that somehow resembled creatures known as "hobbits" as described by another author. Whatever changes have occurred since are not of my doing, and it is best that those who made them comment further ;)

BTW, I have played a couple of halfling PCs, although not for any considerable period of time. The one I would most enjoy playing (OAD&D) currently is the gnome illusionist thief I created some few years back but have had precious little opportunity to play...

(Rathe, if you're reading this post, when you come up to Lake Geneva and DMing for us again?!)

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 18th September, 2002, 07:55 PM

Re: Re: Re: D&D cartoon & nostalgia

Old Typos & Dyslexia Coming at You again!

Whoa, and in reading my last post I saw I have spelled a word backwards. I must look at the keys before I tap them :rolleyes:

Anyway, moving along...

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Hikaru*

**Don't... I get a save vs. traps? :(**

**I have seen adult-oriented anime (Japanese cartoons, and no I am not referring specifically to the hentai sort) but in the US, the great majority of cartoons seem to be aimed at kids. Those cartoons who are not are usually erotic ones; I cannot remember any real American adult-themed non-erotic cartoon. When/where would yours have been aired?**

**CAN I SEE IT?!!! :eek:**

**Now THAT's a bad script. The start was promising but the ending is a mess. Please rewrite it NOW. :(**

**Who's got the rights on the series, now? Hasbro? Marvel?**

---

Heh, and you read the post, so you failed your save.

Sorry, but Marvel got the new script back after I heartily approved it. I believe the original show's script that I had in DDEC files are now either in WotCs archives or else lost.

By "adult" I was referring to a target audience of above age 12, not "adult" adult :D The show would have been more mature, more akin to a Spiderman or Barman cartoon, than to the original D&D presentation, that's all.

I believe that the agreement says that the D&D Cartoon Show property is jointly owned, so that would now be Hasbro and Marvel.

Cover it well enough?

Ciao,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 18th September, 2002, 08:06 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by MerricB*  
**G'day, Gary!**

***Glad to hear that thieves & demi-humans have always been popular. (Hang on a moment, am I glad about the thieves? ;))***

***And once again, thank you muchly for your time spent answering our questions.***

***What project that you're working on or have recently completed that you're currently most excited about?***

***Cheers!***

---

Welcome, MerricB:)

Posting here a few times a day is a good break from other work, so I am still having fun, thanks to you all here!

As a matter of fact, I just turned over a big folder with about 30 files in it to the good folks at Troll Lord. When it is edited and laid out, illos in place, it will be the third book in the "Gygaxian" fantasy worlds series, the reference/sourcebooks of generic nature, but with both D20 and LA game specific information included therein. It deals with everyday life in a fantasy world, and I have as a working title EVERYDAY LIFE.

Technology, socio-economic class, and government organization are the key things in it as far as I am concerned. It is a sort of a who, what, when, where, why, and how treatment of the culture and society of a fantasy world of basically European extraction. that's the common basis for most settings, of course. such information being common knowledge to a great extent here and in Europe.

I am particularly interested in how my discussion of the role of the ecclesiastics in a deity-active world will be received by the grognards of RPGing...

Heh,  
Gary

---

barsoomcore

Wednesday, 18th September, 2002, 09:45 PM

I don't have any questions, Gary, I just want to say thank you.

I can't imagine what my life would have been like without that crazy game I stumbled over back in the 70's. Sure, it's just a game, but you could say the same thing about bowling.

Wait a minute, that's not what I meant...

Seriously, though, thanks. You and everyone else involved did a good thing. I've had a lot of happy times as a result of your hard work.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 18th September, 2002, 10:44 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by barsoomcore*

***...Sure, it's just a game, but you could say the same thing about bowling. ...***

---

Aargh! Cut to the quick, I am! :)

And seriously here, you are welcome. I am well pleased that my wife has not had time to become involved in RPGs. Not only does that give me time off with the gang, but it saves me from having to put up with her avid game play. I won't usually play hearts with Gail, nor will son Ernie, as she is too vicious a player and shoots the moon far too often. She is just about the only one I know who will play as tenaciously as I do in railroad games too. Speaking of which, son Alex wins about 90% of those no matter how hard his parents try to wrest victory for themselves.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Hikaru

Thursday, 19th September, 2002, 12:33 AM

Re: Re: Re: Re: D&D cartoon & nostalgia

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**Heh, and you read the post, so you failed your save.**

---

Oh. You cheated, that should have been a save vs. spells.

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh* **Sorry, but Marvel got the new script back after I heartily approved it. I believe the original show's script that I had in DDEC files are now either in WotCs archives or else lost.**

---

Can't you send ninjas there to get it back? :(

Didn't you share the script with anyone else who may have kept a copy?

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh* **By "adult" I was referring to a target audience of above age 12, not "adult" adult :D The show would have been more mature, more akin to a Spiderman or Barman cartoon, than to the original D&D presentation, that's all.**

---

But that would have been niiice. (Where is the crying emoticon?)

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh* **I believe that the agreement says that the D&D Cartoon Show property is jointly owned, so that would now be Hasbro and Marvel.**

---

Jointly owned by Hasbro and Marvel?! :eek: It is definitely dead. (Where is the crying emoticon again?)

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh* **Cover it well enough?**

---

Alas.

---

Kapture

Thursday, 19th September, 2002, 12:39 AM

Mr. Gygax,

This question has been nagging me for years.

As a kid, I had a collection of little plastic monsters. They were very cheaply made, five and dime toys. They looked like no standard kind of creatures. Just weird little thingies.

Several years ago, out of the blue, I realized that a few of these monsters I had in the seventies looked just like the first Monster Manual pictures of the Rust Monster and Bullete. There may have been others, but the plastic toys are lost to history and I can't recall.

My question is this: since the monsters have no obvious inspiration in folklore, they would seem to be purely imaginative in design. But it seems nearly impossible to me that two totally different, purely imaginative designs would look so similar.

Had you seen the toys before those monsters were written?

Thank you,

Kapture

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## Q&A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Page 16 of 36   First   ...   6   7   8   9   10   11   12   13   14   15   16   17   18   19   20   21   22   23   24   25   26   ...   Last

jester47

Thursday, 19th September, 2002, 02:11 AM

I too remember these little plastic toys. I thought the rust monster looking plastic mini was a prehistoric animal...

Aaron.

sleezesteve

Thursday, 19th September, 2002, 02:38 AM

When I heard the original Castle Greyhawk was going to be published I nearly soiled myself but my initial elation was lost when I read it was not going to be for d20 but Hackmaster instead. While I have no problem with Hackmaster a product made for that system would not be easily transferable into my current third edition Greyhawk game without a lot of work I don't want to do. I spend money on RPG products so I don't have to do that work. :(

So please Mr. Gygax have a conversion made with the little d20 logo on the front. I'm sure the market is out there for it, in fact I pretty sure it would sell more than the Hackmaster version (though I don't have the data to back that statement up only a hunch). :D

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 19th September, 2002, 02:27 PM

Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: D&D cartoon & nostalgia

Quote:

*Originally posted by Hikaru*

***Didn't you share the script with anyone else who may have kept a copy?***

With the regular scripts, I reviewed and marked each, then we copied the work, sent the original back to Marvel in 24 hours.

As the script in question was for a production not yet under agreement, all I did was read and comment in a memo to Marvel, returning the script without copying it. At such time as the deal was agreed to the same script, likely with a few changes, would have been sent to me again, so...

The short answer is no:(

Ciao,  
Gary

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 19th September, 2002, 02:37 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Kapture*

***Mr. Gygax,***

***This question has been nagging me for years.***

***[snippage]***

***Had you seen the toys before those monsters were written?***

***Thank you,***

***Kapture***

Heh, and indeed! When we were all playing CHAINMAIL Fantasy Supplement Miniatures on the sand table in my basement, finding figurines for monsters was a priority. Of course the fantasy miniatures field was nil then. In my search I came upon the bag of monsters in a dime store, brought them home, and various persons involved suggested what they might be. Eventually we created names and stats for all, and so the resemblance is no coincidence at all ;)

BTW, the red dragon we used was a conversion I made from a stegosarus, and the lone giant figure we had I converted from a 90mm scale Hauser Viking, using a kitchen match and auto body putty to make his club. Hair snipped from one of my daughters' old dolls gave him a real "frightwig" too :D Yes, my rude theft of hair was discovered, and I was in deep kimche with my youngest daughter for a long time because of it.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 19th September, 2002, 02:40 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by jester47*

***I too remember these little plastic toys. I thought the rust monster looking plastic mini was a prehistoric animal...***

**Aaron.**

---

Heh, and no, the figure that we based the rust monster on was vaguely sauracian, but it was not actually any dinosaur--at least any one I ever say illustrated in the dozen or som books I have on them.

Ciao,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 19th September, 2002, 02:48 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by sleezesteve*

**[snippage]**

***So please Mr. Gygax have a conversion made with the little d20 logo on the front. I'm sure the market is out there for it, in fact I pretty sure it would sell more than the Hackmaster version (though I don't have the data to back that statement up only a hunch).  
:D***

---

The castle ruins and dungeons from my original campaign were constructed based on D&D and then AD&D. Those games are so different from 3E that the whole spirit of the work would fail--at least that's the opinion that I have and Rob Kuntz shares.

Frankly, I would far prefer doing the work as an OAD&D one, but that's verboten. The closest system to it is the HACKMASTER one, so that's what we are considering.

As for including D20, that's the publishers call. However, the lengthy conversion information needed would likely blow the whole project out of the water due to size. As it is we are looking at something like six or so parts to complete the work. Naturally, we will so design the separate portions to that they stand alone as a complete module, but have hooks that will enable the next to be added if the participants desire.

Ciao,  
Gary

---

jester47

Thursday, 19th September, 2002, 04:45 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***Heh, and no, the figure that we based the rust monster on was vaguely sauracian, but it was not actually any dinosaur--at least any one I ever say illustrated in the dozen or som books I have on them.***

***Ciao,  
Gary***

---

Let me clarify, when I was a little kid I thought it was a prehistoric creature that I simply had not learned about yet...

Aaron.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 19th September, 2002, 06:14 PM

Rather OT This...

Just reading the most recent posts on the economics of D&D. Whew! What a lot of gyrations are needed to reconcile all the problems. I feel guilty as I started the mess...although I didn't promulgate it to the point it is now. anyway...

What a far simpler, generic, system the "\$" one I use. Prices of some things need to be set for the game, of course, but all the worry about income, general prices of common goods, etc. is easily covered. Sure makes running a campaign much easier ;)

Gary

---

Clumsy Bob

Thursday, 19th September, 2002, 06:57 PM

Hi Gary.

A little question for you if I may. Gord, Chert, Curley and Gellor. Where did these guys originally come from, were they PC's in one of your games or straight out of your head? What made you choose a thief/acrobat as the main character in your series of novels and what was the story with the Gord the Rogue novels and the Greyhawk adventures series, why two. That's actually three questions, but what the heck.

Cheers

ClumsyBob

---

## Breakdaddy

Thursday, 19th September, 2002, 07:00 PM

Gary, do you still read Dragon magazine? I am a participant in another lengthy thread on this board about the magazine and it seems that there is some very vocal opposition to the current direction of the magazine. Do you think it still follows the spirit of the old magazine?

---

## Jabba Von Hutt

Thursday, 19th September, 2002, 08:41 PM

Bonjours Gary!

Hi Gary,  
first off thank you for creating a game that I have been enjoying for over 20 years.

You mentioned your fondness for miniatures battles, have you ever played anything from Games Workshop? If so, fantasy or 40k? Which races? Do you still play when you get a chance?

Merci,  
Alan

---

## Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 19th September, 2002, 09:33 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Clumsy Bob*  
**Hi Gary.**

***A little question for you if I may. Gord, Chert, Curley and Gellor. Where did these guys originally come from, were they PC's in one of your games or straight out of your head? What made you choose a thief acrobat as the main character in your series of novels and what was the story with the Gord the Rogue novels and the Greyhawk adventures series, why two. Thats actually three questions, but what the heck.***

***Cheers***

***ClumsyBob***

Three is okay.

Of the quartet of characters from the novels, Curley Greenleaf is the only PC, one I played for a time. Sadly, I have misplaced or lost his record sheet. I thought a story beginning as I chose required a protagonist of the sort Gord was, a thief and then thief acrobat. It was interesting to develop him in story and imagined adventures too, as I had never played such a PC, although a something-thief demi-human character is familiar to me.

When I parted company with TSR, I could no longer use the "Greyhawk" name, so the five later novels were done with the "Gord the Rogue" banner.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

## Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 19th September, 2002, 09:41 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Breakdaddy*  
**Gary, do you still read Dragon magazine? I am a participant in another lengthy thread on this board about the magazine and it seems that there is some very vocal opposition to the current direction of the magazine. Do you think it still follows the spirit of the old magazine?**

This is somewhere I don't want to head. Actually, from my POV DRAGON should have kept on with dungeon adventures, and splitting off DUNGEON as a separate publication was a disservice to the gamers.

As for a certain article recently run in the zine, I believe it was ill advised.

Allow that to suffice, okay :)

Ciao,  
Gary

---

## Geoffrey

Thursday, 19th September, 2002, 09:52 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***Frankly, I would far prefer doing the work [Greyhawk dungeons] as an OAD&D one, but that's verboten. The closest system to it is the***



**HACKMASTER one, so that's what we are considering.**

---

This is the most exciting news in gaming! Here's my wish: You and Rob write-up the dungeons using OAD&D rules. Kenzer publishes it as-is with the following tongue-in-cheek note: "The infamous Gary Gygax finally found his way into our office. He was wild-eyed and waving a thick stack of papers in our faces and demanding we publish his manuscript as-is. Since it was the only way to get him to leave, we agreed. To make the encounters herein fully compatible with the latest version of HackMaster, just add 20 to everythings hit points and leave the rest the hell alone." :D

---

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 19th September, 2002, 09:53 PM

Re: Bonjours Gary!

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Jabba Von Hutt*

**Hi Gary,**

**first off thank you for creating a game that I have been enjoying for over 20 years.**

**You mentioned your fondness for miniatures battles, have you ever played anything from Games Workshop? If so, fantasy or 40k? Which races? Do you still play when you get a chance?**

**Merci,  
Alan**

---

I have played a game some few games fantasy miniatures like the GW kind--one an OAD&D-based one son Ernie ran using a number of the GW figurines--but not the actual thing. My interest in mainly in historical miniatures.

I do play when the opportunity arises, but that's far too rare. Another reason I look forward to "retiring" so as to get in more game play :D

My current "want" list is WWII on a 1:1 scale, some DEADLANDS, Napoleonics (sea included), but in fact I'll usually play any period and have a good deal of fun if the rules are decent and the battle scenario interesting/challenging.

Tonight I run my LA game campaign, so soon I need to think about that. My group is play-testing a module, THE HALL OF MANY PANES, that will be done in both D20 and LA system. They are really pretty good, so I am going to toss in some material not in the ms. so as to make them feel a bit more "challenged," shall we say...

Ciao,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 19th September, 2002, 10:26 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Geoffrey*

***This is the most exciting news in gaming! Here's my wish: You and Rob write-up the dungeons using OAD&D rules. Kenzer publishes it as-is with the following tongue-in-cheek note: "The infamous Gary Gygax finally found his way into our office. He was wild-eyed and waving a thick stack of papers in our faces and demanding we publish his manuscript as-is. Since it was the only way to get him to leave, we agreed. To make the encounters herein fully compatible with the latest version of HackMaster, just add 20 to everythings hit points and leave the rest the hell alone." :D***

---

Heh...

Not far off the mark, at least in regards as to how the work will likely be written :eek:

Gary

---

Breakdaddy

Thursday, 19th September, 2002, 10:41 PM

Heck yeah! I will buy a copy of HACKMASTER if Gary starts taking me back to the good old days like this! On a side note, now I feel damned old. :D

---

MerricB

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 03:54 AM

G'day Gary!

More questions from a rather inquisitive Australian, I'm afraid... :)

Do any of your Worldbuilder books contain information helpful towards implementing taxation, tithing and other anti-PC-money schemes in a fantasy/mediaeval campaign?

How often were you playing D&D during the early years? Would "lots" be an appropriate description? :)

Cheers!

---

the Jester

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 04:07 AM

Hey there Gary!

My question is this: before UA came out, in many of the Dragon articles you published with 'teaser' stuff in it, you referred to a PH2. You had talked about several other subclasses that never saw print- the mystic, savant, mounteback, etc.

How far along did your developement of these go? Any chance we'll ever see any of the details, or was it all lost during the TSR/Gygax fallout?

---

ColonelHardisson

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 04:37 AM

---

Hey Gary -

Ever play OGRE?

Also, I don't recall you saying much about playing starship war games, like Full Thrust or Babylon 5 Wars. Do they not interest you much? Are there any you've played and liked?

▼ Page 16 of 36   ◀◀ First   ◀ ...   6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 ...   ▶ Last   ▶▶   [Show 20 post\(s\) from this thread on one page](#)

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## Q&A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Page 17 of 36   First   ...   7   8   9   10   11   12   13   14   15   16   17   18   19   20   21   22   23   24   25   26   27   ...   Last

bones\_mccoy

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 08:19 AM

Gary,

This is a follow-up to a post on the Pied Piper boards: will you be joining Rob Kuntz in the creation of an OAD&D style rules-set using the OGL?

Considering HackMaster's success and the longevity and continued vibrancy of the OAD&D community, I do believe there would be a very significant market for it. Also, such a move would avoid all the legal entanglements you have with writing for OAD&D. And lastly, you wanted to do a revised version anyway when you were last in the captain's chair, so here ya go! :)

Clumsy Bob

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 08:42 AM

Quote:

*When I parted company with TSR, I could no longer use the "Greyhawk" name, so the five later novels were done with the "Gord the Rogue" banner.*

I have read Gord the Rogue, Sea of Death and Come Endless Darkness. What are the other two novels and more importantly what happens!

In the novels Tharizdum (sp?) plays a central role. Did he ever get released? What did you think of his portrayal in Return to the Temple of Elemental Evil, actually what did you think of the re-visit to your classic adventure.

Cheers

Bob

MerricB

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 02:23 PM

Full list of Gord the Rogue books:

(TSR): Saga of Old City, Artifact of Evil

(NI): City of Hawks, Night Arrant, Sea of Death, Come Endless Darkness, Dance with Demons

Yes, Tharizdun does get released, and Gary has a lot to make up for because of what happens! :)

Gary, if you find this un-stickyfied thread again (arrggghh!!!), could you clear up one thing that bothers me from the AD&D rules?

Halflings: -1 Str, +1 Dex.

In the "min/max" ability score table, they've got a maximum Dex of 18, and a maximum Con of 19. I've always wondered about whether or not that was a typo, or if they once got a +1 Con or whatever. :)

Though I've always ruled that its a typo (halflings may have a 19 Dex), it is one of those things that makes me wonder... ;)

Cheers & Best Wishes!

D'karr

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 03:06 PM

Stickify

A thread with over 10,000 views and over 300 questions and answers surely deserves to stay at the top of the heap.

Could one of the moderators please return this thread to the top?

Thanks.

ColonelHardisson

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 03:40 PM

I know that Morrur wouldn't want a thread permanently stickied to the top. The best way to keep it going is to continue to post to it.

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 03:43 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Breakdaddy*

**Heck yeah! I will buy a copy of HACKMASTER if Gary starts taking me back to the good old days like this! On a side note, now I feel damned old. :D**

Well, try dealing with "Will you still need me, will you still feed me..." when you're 64.

:eek:

Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 03:59 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by MerricB*  
**G'day Gary!**

***More questions from a rather inquisitive Australian, I'm afraid... ;)***

***Do any of your Worldbuilder books contain information helpful towards implementing taxation, tithing and other anti-PC-money schemes in a fantasy/mediaeval campaign?***

***How often were you playing D&D during the early years? Would "lots" be an appropriate description? :)***

***Cheers!***

---

G'Day Mate!

The EVERYDAY LIFE book deals with some bit of that--taxation. As it will vary from state to state, I did not go into it heavily. There is the royal tax, that of the clergy, that of the city or ruling noble, and that of the company/guild the person belongs to.

As I mentioned, I prefer most states to have a fairly well-to-do society as that enables much that I wish to bring into the campaign from the GM's standpoint. Oddly enough, even wealthy characters seem to resent taxation even when it doesn't really drain their finances, only slows their progress towards some economic goal.

In late 1972 through 1975 I probably averaged at least 30 hours a week with D&D. I'd work a half day to keep the wolf from the door, then play the game or DM a group. Late at night I'd make notes and/or write. In 1976 I had to spend more time working, I became a full-time employee of TSR in June of 75, and I was writing a lot of game material then also. My gaming time likely dropped to an average of about 12 hours a week.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

jasper

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 04:09 PM

Exactly how did you play dragons?

In 1st edition they had as many hit points as the adventurers. Hey all critters had a d8.

Liked your Slayers Guide, some good ideas, some repeats from your and others articles in the dragon mag.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 04:09 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by the Jester*  
**Hey there Gary!**

***My question is this: before UA came out, in many of the Dragon articles you published with 'teaser' stuff in it, you referred to a PH2. You had talked about several other subclasses that never saw print- the mystic, savant, mountebank, etc.***

***How far along did your developement of these go? Any chance we'll ever see any of the details, or was it all lost during the TSR/Gygax fallout?***

---

Howdy!

First. I did the article material to intriduce the convepts dealt with and get feedback from gamers. I have always paid attention to that, even if I don't agree with the comments and suggestions ;)

I indeed planned to see to a revised AD&D game, a Second Edition, that added the new material from UA and elsewhere, compiled the various monsters books into an encyclopedia-like work, and updated the DMG. I really wanted to go over the rules and mechanics of the game to see about possibly changing things a bit to include select skills for classes, and also make the system more adaptable to other genres. Indeed, I wrote a lengthy memo to management about this play, suggesting it begin implimentation in house in c. 1986.

The new classes--mountebank, mystic, and savant were in progress of development when the troubles at TSR caused me to drop that work so as to manage and direct. Likely the nores and all are somewhere here. I am precluded by legal agreement from exploiting any A/D&D material. Won't give the stuff out for free either, so that it can be exploited by some publisher...

Heh,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 04:21 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by ColonelHardisson*  
**Hey Gary -**

**Ever play OGRE?**

**Also, I don't recall you saying much about playing starship war games, like Full Thrust or Babylon 5 Wars. Do they not interest you much? Are there any you've played and liked?**

---

Ho There Colonel:)

No, as to OGRE, but son Ernie was a big fan of the game. I did play a bit of the game that Lou Zocchi did, the various alien ships with various differing weapons played on the table top (floor). Can't recall its name but I do remember Lou refereeing for us.

Back in the late 1960s I ran a PBM strategic and tactical game named WAR OF EMPIRES that Tullio Proni conceived and I rewrote and expanded.

I don't have any consuming interest in SF wargames based off of movies/TV.

Have you seen the rather anachronistic LA game "Fantastical Science" genre expansion LEJENDARY ASTEROGUES? It's posted online in an early beta test format. That contains rules for spaceship (heh) battles.

Ciao,  
Gary

---

ColonelHardisson

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 04:46 PM

I haven't seen that. I'll look and see if I can find it.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 04:48 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by bones\_mccoy*  
**Gary,**

***This is a follow-up to a post on the Pied Piper boards: will you be joining Rob Kuntz in the creation of an OAD&D style rules-set using the OGL?***

***Considering HackMaster's success and the longevity and continued vibrancy of the OAD&D community, I do believe there would be a very significant market for it. Also, such a move would avoid all the legal entanglements you have with writing for OAD&D. And lastly, you wanted to do a revised version anyway when you were last in the captain's chair, so here ya go! :)***

---

Today's round of questions is lengthy indeed! Whew, and I had to take a break to get a bite of breakfast--late start this AM due to running my campaign last night, staying up later than usual. Never can go right to sleep after an exciting time RPGing:D

Anyway, as to the question, Rob and I are indeed discussing what needs to be done. I have sent him an outline of my map plan, something I did some months ago. Rob has been generally busy "elsewhere" this week, so I expect that sometime next week he and I will get into the details of a format agreement between us for the project.

If Kenzer is the publisher, they will not be an OGL/D20 product, eh?

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 04:54 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Clumsy Bob*

***I have read Gord the Rogue, Sea of Death and Come Endless Darkness. What are the other two novels and more importantly what happens!***

***In the novels Tharizdum (sp?) plays a central role. Did he ever get released? What did you think of his portrayal in Return to the Temple of Elemental Evil, actually what did you think of the re-visit to your classic adventure.***

***Cheers***

***Bob***

---

Bob, MerricB covered your queries well:)

As for Tharizdun in the RttToEE, I have not seen that work so I can't comment. Sorry:(

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 05:01 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by MerricB*

**Yes, Tharizdun does get released, and Gary has a lot to make up for because of what happens! :)**

---

Bah! The shoe is on the T\$R foot. Such stuff that happened with the Wog back then. May Tharizdun take all the guilty parties... :rolleyes:

Quote:

---

**Gary, if you find this un-stickyfied thread again (arrggghh!!!), could you clear up one thing that bothers me from the AD&D rules?**

**Halflings: -1 Str, +1 Dex.**

**In the "min/max" ability score table, they've got a maximum Dex of 18, and a maximum Con of 19. I've always wondered about whether or not that was a typo, or if they once got a +1 Con or whatever. :)**

**Though I've always ruled that its a typo (halflings may have a 19 Dex), it is one of those things that makes me wonder... ;)**

**Cheers & Best Wishes!**

---

Wow! I've never had this called to my attention before. That's astonishing, because so many sharp eyes have looked over the work, and errors were pointed out with alacrity :eek:

It is clearly a gaff. The entry should be 19 Dex, of course, not 19 Con.

:)

Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 05:04 PM

Re: Stickify

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by D'karr*

**A thread with over 10,000 views and over 300 questions and answers surely deserves to stay at the top of the heap.**

**Could one of the moderators please return this thread to the top?**

**Thanks.**

---

What? This thread is no longer sticky?! Lesse majeste! Foul! Sob...whatever did I do to deserve such treatment?

Heh. Ah well, I've indicated that I get an email whenever someone responds, so I don't have to worry about the position of the thread :D

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 05:07 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by ColonelHardisson*

**I know that Morrus wouldn't want a thread permanently stickied to the top. The best way to keep it going is to continue to post to it.**

---

As you did in posting, eh?

Anyway, hasn't Morrus ever heard of a "loss leader"?

Oh, well, never mind that; not a good analogy... :eek:

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 05:13 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by jasper*

**Exactly how did you play dragons?**

**In 1st edition they had as many hit points as the adventurers. Hey all critters had a d8.**

**Liked your Slayers Guide, some good ideas, some repeats from your and others articles in the dragon mag.**

---

Thanks, and when I was the DM most of the PCs were charry indeed when about to face a dragon. I assumed the role of that creature as if it were my own PC, and played it thus. Of course I made sure the initial setting and all would give the dragon some advantages. One time a party of two mid-level PCs were nearly slain by a young red dragon that used spider climb and invisibility to surprise them from above when they

entered it's lair. It ain't the stats that count so much as the verve with which the critters are played.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 05:18 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by ColonelHardisson*  
***I haven't seen that. I'll look and see if I can find it.***

---

Sorry I can't recall the name of Lou's game--ALIEN SPACE maybe. Players choose which vessel they want. The spaceships have weapons like stalker pods, torpedoes, the "gapper-zapper," and so on. Tactical manoeuvre and much shooting at one another in a general melee. We had great fun playing.

Gary

---

shadow

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 05:26 PM

Gary, I've been wondering for a while what was your inspiration for some of the gods of Greyhawk. Specifically I've been wondering about Erythnul, Zagyg, and Wastri

Erythnul, the many, really kind of reminds me that old movie, Clash of the Titans. In one part of the movie skeletons spring up from the ground where the hydra's teeth had been sown. In the same way, where ever Erythnul's blood spills, monsters spring up. What was your inspiration for Erythnul?

I can see that Zagyg is Gygax spelled backwards (With Z replacing the X). I've read somewhere the Zagyg was originally a mortal who ascended to godhood. Was he originally one of your PCs?

And, I've been wondering about Wastri for a long time. The god of bigotry and human superiority is depicted as being slimy and toad like. The way he is depicted almost seems to be poking fun at some of the various hate groups.

Anyway, I would appreciate your response.

---

bones\_mccoy

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 05:34 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

---

***Anyway, as to the question, Rob and I are indeed discussing what needs to be done. I have sent him an outline of my map plan, something I did some months ago. Rob has been generally busy "elsewhere" this week, so I expect that sometime next week he and I will get into the details of a format agreement between us for the project.***

---

I think you're talking about Castle GarHack here. My question was about this post of Rob's:

"There is also another choice, though with a longer road in mind, but which also opens an interesting future for Old School products such as EGG's, mine, whomevers: redoing the OGC to make it compatible with AD&D. This is possible, though time-consuming, but I have bounced this idea off of EGG recently. You just wouldn't be able to call it AD&D, but once finished, would be even closer than HM. The pros of this is in bringing purists, AD&2 ODnD players and DMs all under one tent. Cons: finding publishers who would support the rules through publishing them and using them in their game line. I for one believe that the 1e market cannot be ignored any longer. HM/Kenzer has proven its viability, so why not others?"

What do you think about that idea? Apart from "my God, what a mountain of work!" ;)

▼ Page 17 of 36   ◀◀ First   ◀ ...   7   8   9   10   11   12   13   14   15   16   10   18   19   20   21   22   23   24   25   26   27   ...   ▶ Last ▶▶   Show 20 post(s) from this thread on one page

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## Q&amp;A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Page 18 of 36    &lt;&lt; First    ...    8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 ...    Last &gt;&gt;    Show 20 post(s) from this thread on one page

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 06:02 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by shadow**Gary, I've been wondering for a while what was your inspiration for some of the gods of Greyhawk. Specifically I've been wondering about Erythnul, Zagyg, and Wastri**Erythnul, the many, really kind of reminds me that old movie, Clash of the Titans. In one part of the movie skeletons spring up from the ground where the hydra's teeth had been sown. In the same way, where ever Erythnul's blood spills, monsters spring up. What was your inspiration for Erythnul?**I can see that Zagyg is Gygax spelled backwards (With Z replacing the X). I've read somewhere the Zagyg was originally a mortal who ascended to godhood. Was he originally one of your PCs?**And, I've been wondering about Wastri for a long time. The god of bigotry and human superiority is depicted as being slimy and toad like. The way he is depicted almost seems to be poking fun at some of the various hate groups.**Anyway, I would appreciate your response.*

Heh, well...

Zagig/Zagyg is based on a sort of joke--me as the mad designer of Greyhawk Castle and its dungeons. After all, how else could such a place exist? Zagig was never a PC, only an NPC played by me...

Erythnul was my conception, and it was inspired by need in the pantheon being created, and the "Demon of Blood & Seed" from Hindu mythology provided the conceptual basis for one of his capabilities.

Wastri, ah, a favorite of mine. His original appearance was in an early, never fully published (rightfully so) novel called THE GNOME CACHE. In withdrawing to the marshes to live a life of cntemplation, Wastri found only that he loves batrachians, that hunting small demi-humans with giant toads was amusing sport, and the only enlightenment he received was from the first used to roast prey taken. Perhaps it was a comment on extreme conceits of religious sort....

Gary

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 06:07 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by bones\_mccoy**I think you're talking about Castle GarHack here. My question was about this post of Rob's:**[snippage]**What do you think about that idea? Apart from "my God, what a mountain of work!" ;)*

As a pragmatist, I discount the idea entirely. I believe that Kenzer has licensed the old material, WotC will not have the least interest in adding it to the OGL, so the speculation is to no useful end. IMO there is only one possible route open--other than genericizing the material and publishing it thus.

right you are about monumental tasks too. In any form the project is one of great length and like effort.

Cheerio,  
Gary

PatEllis15

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 08:11 PM

Gary: Wow, took me about an hour to read through all this, thanks for your your time and effort (both here, and back when you wrote D&D!)

Curius if you can comment on WotC/Hasbro's marketing strategy.

WotC has elected to push adventure development to Dungeon, and have released only a few adventures for 3E (The "Adventure Path" series). Further, they figure that with the OGL, that the market will be flooded with adventures, but that the OGL will help sell more PHB's, DMG etc.

From you knowledge with LA, and your past experience as the head of TSR, do you think this was/is wise?



To follow up, What I have always enjoyed about Greyhawk was the skeletal feel that you gave it. The adventures you published provided glimpses of the detail that lied beneath the surface, and provided many idea's that a DM could use to flesh out the world a bit more.

Was this purposeful, or by design?

Not being familiar with DJ or LA, did you use the same approach with the gameworlds for those systems?

Pat E

Taro Sarask

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 08:47 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by PatEllis15*

**Gary: Wow, took me about an hour to read through all this, thanks for your your time and effort (both here, and back when you wrote D&D!)**

---

Ah, welcome, and if only it had taken me so short a time to read and respond :D

Quote:

---

**Curius if you can comment on WotC/Hasbro's marketing strategy.**

**WotC has elected to push adventure development to Dungeon, and have released only a few adventures for 3E (The "Adventure Path" series). Further, they figure that with the OGL, that the market will be flooded with adventures, but that the OGL will help sell more PHB's, DMG etc.**

**From you knowledge with LA, and your past experience as the head of TSR, do you think this was/is wise?**

---

Without critiquing what WotC/Hasbro has and is doing, I can say that my management philosophy for a game company is quite different from theirs. Of course Hasbro is a mass-market toy and game company.

The OGL and D20 are clever moves that are, in my estimation, meant not only to support the 3E game but also to capture more of the RPG market by broadening the base audience for it by having other games covert to the D&D base system.

I would not have done that. I would certainly have licensed at low royalty select companies to provide support material, though. Such product would then have the game logo on it too.

Quote:

---

**To follow up, What I have always enjoyed about Greyhawk was the skeletal feel that you gave it. The adventures you published provided glimpses of the detail that lied beneath the surface, and provided many idea's that a DM could use to flesh out the world a bit more.**

**Was this purposeful, or by design?**

**Not being familiar with DJ or LA, did you use the same approach with the gameworlds for those systems?**

**Taro Sarask**

---

Heh, and it was done with purposeful design. I sought to create an interesting, even compelling, base from which the GMs could work so as to create campaigns and adventures with sufficient of their own input, the "group personality" if you will, so as to allow each to be a unique expression.

Yes, in general I did that with the DJ/MYTHUS system--as some hace noted, the EPIC OF AERTH is near a generic fantasy world--and likewise this holds true for the LA game world, the LEJENDARY EARTH. In it I have provided for near endless expansion and variation through "portal anomaly" areas and portals to parallel worlds.

Cherio,  
Gary

---

ColonelHardisson

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 09:10 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**As you did in posting, eh?**

**Anyway, hasn't Morrus ever heard of a "loss leader"?**

**Oh, well, never mind that; not a good analogy... :eek:**

**Cheerio,**

Gary

---

Well, sure, Gary, I don't want this thread to fall off the page. I'd rather it was stickied to the top also, but that's beyond my control. Posting to the thread isn't, though. Just because I've differed with you on occasion about some things doesn't mean I'm not a huge fan. You'd be surprised how much common ground we have.

Aww, jeez, now they're gonna call me a wild-eyed fanboy. Oh well.

Full Thrust might be a game you'd enjoy. It's a good, solid starship combat game.

I was wondering about your reaction to the death of Poul Anderson not too long ago. I know you were a fan of his.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 20th September, 2002, 11:56 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by ColonelHardisson*

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***Well, sure, Gary, I don't want this thread to fall off the page. I'd rather it was stickied to the top also, but that's beyond my control. Posting to the thread isn't, though. Just because I've differed with you on occasion about some things doesn't mean I'm not a huge fan. You'd be surprised how much common ground we have.***

---

Frist, what would we learn, and what fun would be had, if we all agreed on everything? So no to fret in the least that your POV has now and then differed radically from mine. Of course I am usually right, so you should vote for me... Wait, forget that. It's from an upcoming political speech,

Quote:

---

***Full Thrust might be a game you'd enjoy. It's a good, solid starship combat game.***

---

***I was wondering about your reaction to the death of Poul Anderson not too long ago. I know you were a fan of his.***

---

Possibly, even likely I would, because I enjoy playing most good games. Finding time and opponents is the trick. I will make time to play OPERATION OVERLORD at the drop of a hat, for example. Unfortunately for me, not many takers hereabouts. Last game I played Peter Adkison was the British, I was the US, and sone Luke was the Germans. Another Allied victory:)

Yes, I was saddened to learn that Poul Anderson had passed away. Another of the F&SF giants whose work I am so fond of is now gone. At least his writing remains, but no new work <sigh>

Ciao,  
Gary

---

Deedlit

Saturday, 21st September, 2002, 01:56 AM

Why were gnomes put in? Hobbits/Halflings, Elves, Dwarves, and Humans had a clear origin in the works of Tolkien(Which seem to be the basis), and Half-Elves were there(Albeit uncommon.) and Half-orcs existed, though they were merely villains. But what was the purpose of the gnomes, and what was their inspiration?

---

Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 21st September, 2002, 02:51 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Deedlit*

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***Why were gnomes put in? Hobbits/Halflings, Elves, Dwarves, and Humans had a clear origin in the works of Tolkien(Which seem to be the basis), and Half-Elves were there(Albeit uncommon.) and Half-orcs existed, though they were merely villains. But what was the purpose of the gnomes, and what was their inspiration?***

---

A fair question!

Indeed, the number of JRRT fans who were potential D&D gamers encouraged me to include races like those in his works in the game. Dwarves, of course, are common in a lot of myth, German and Schadanavian. The elves in D&D were not those of the Rings Trilogy, but hobbits/halflings were that. As a reader of fables, fairy tales, fantasy, and myth for a long time before the work of JRRT was in print, adding another choice, the gnome, seemed a good thing, as in fantasy the former elemental had become more an archetypical "fairy" race. Inspiration came from extensive reading, and of course designing the race to fin the D&D model was not a great challenge ;)

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Breakdaddy

Saturday, 21st September, 2002, 03:48 PM

I'm having a damned hard time trying to find Lejendary Adventures. I want to check it out for a few minutes and maybe purchase it if it fits my gaming needs. Unfortunately, I've been unable to locate anything for it at my local game retailer. I've mentioned this to the store owner, but he kinda shrugged it off. He is a bit of a smug bastard anyhow. :mad:

---

Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 21st September, 2002, 04:30 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Breakdaddy*

***I'm having a damned hard time trying to find Legendary Adventures. I want to check it out for a few minutes and maybe purchase it if it fits my gaming needs. Unfortunately, I've been unable to locate anything for it at my local game retailer. I've mentioned this to the store owner, but he kinda shrugged it off. He is a bit of a smug bastard anyhow. :mad:***

---

Retailers need to be supported, especially those who provide gaming facilities, carry a broad line of RPGs, know their products, and encourage gaming. Display space is valuable, inventory costs money, so naturally a shop will want space used for high-demand products...especially if the staff aren't broadly knowledgeable, are more order-takers than salespersons. All that said, when the Hekaforge Productions line is carried by many distributors, Alliance at the top of the list, why a shop that doesn't stock the products will not special order for a customer is simply beyond me! It is their loss--not merely the sale but potentially the customer too.

If you go to [www.legendary.com](http://www.legendary.com) you will find an exposition of the products, information regarding the LA game system, and a link to RPGme. They handle online orders promptly.

Sorry that your local supplier is so unresponsive to your requests. We do our best to promote and support brick & mortar game outlets, but if one refuses to serve gamers, it deserves to lose their custom:)

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Khan the Warlord

Saturday, 21st September, 2002, 05:19 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by ColonelHardisson*

***Well, sure, Gary, I don't want this thread to fall off the page. I'd rather it was stickied to the top also, but that's beyond my control.***

---

I agree that the thread should still be "stickied" to the top of the page, but I imagine that once it has reached its conclusion, the moderators will put it in the archives for viewing.

So, until then, let's \*bump\* and ask more questions. :)

---

Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 21st September, 2002, 05:29 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Khan the Warlord*

***So, until then, let's \*bump\* and ask more questions. :)***

---

Speaking of bumps, and now specifically to those in the night, I experienced a real poultergeist phenomonon one summer when I was about nine years old. It's a tad OT, so I'll refrain from details unless asked ;)

Gary

---

Khan the Warlord

Saturday, 21st September, 2002, 05:33 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***Speaking of bumps, and now specifically to those in the night, I experienced a real poultergeist phenomonon one summer when I was about nine years old. It's a tad OT, so I'll refrain from details unless asked ;)***

**Gary**

---

This is my official "asking Gary for more details" post.

Seriously, I would love to hear it.

:)

---

Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 21st September, 2002, 05:58 PM

TRUE "GHOST" STORY

Seeing as how I was asked:)

One summer, likely 1947, when I had just turned nine, my parents were heading out to California where my father had purchased some land (La Jolla). Me go on a trip with parents during summer vacation and miss the fun of freedom from scholastic incarceration? Whoa, and how could I weasel out of that?

My parents being good and kindly souls, arranged for some friends to come up and stay at the house during their absence. Better still, those

friends just happened to be the parents of my oldest friend, a lad who lived next door when we were in Chicago, whose mother had wheeled him in his carriage next to my mother with me in a like buggy. Hooray!

My bedroom had bunkbeds, so Dave and I were really having a lot of fun the first night of his stay. Ignoring adult admonishment to go to sleep, we were horseing around at midnight. That's when his parents came up, heard the racket, and set things "right." David was escorted to another bedroom by his father as I was scolded sternly by his mother. Ah well, all good things must end...

Just as I was dozing off, perhaps 10 minutes after the dressing down, a tremendous crash shook the house. The noise came from nearly overhead. My room was near the front of the long house, and it had a full attic, six bedrooms on the second floor. A second after the terrible crash there followed six or seven great thumpings from the same location, the attic. These sounds came from the place of the initial one, moved from there north to the opposite end of the attic as if someone with really long legs were stomping along up there.

In a minute Dave's mother was in my room to see if I had anything to do with the noise. Of course she discovered me huddled under my sheet, quite unwilling to leave the "safety" of my bed. Meantime, Dave's father checked on David, found him fast asleep in his bed in the room across the hall from my own--incidentally that was almost directly under the place where the initial crashing thump originated, but he slept through that and the following noise quite undisturbed.

Mr. Dimery, David's father, roused him, and the four of us proceeded down the hallway to the attic door. Mr. Dimery had picked up a baseball bat from my room, likely fearing the commotion was due to burglars of the like. Unlikely in the extreme, but who at that hour of the night, morning, properly, would think of anything but some such?

As we three stood at the bottom of the steps, David's father turned on the lights, proceeded into the attic, had a cursory glance, then came back down. Too many dark corners and unlighted portions to manage. We locked the door, wedged the key fast, and retired.

In the bright light of morning all four of us proceeded to thoroughly search the attic. Nothing was broken, no trunk or box or crate disturbed. All open windows were fully screened, and those screens fastened in place. In short, no possible physical cause for the whole bizarre series of sounds could be discovered.

That was that. Needless to say, I was thereafter somewhat chary about going up to the attic alone, even in daylight, but that didn't last too long, and soon I was back up there playing. That is until the next time the "ghost" manifested itself in the house--a year later and when I was absolutely alone.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Khan the Warlord

Saturday, 21st September, 2002, 06:10 PM

Re: TRUE "GHOST" STORY

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*  
**Seeing as how I was asked:)**

---

:P

Entertaining story, Gary!

Quote:

---

*Meantime, Dave's father checked on David, found him fast asleep in his bed in the room across the hall from my own--incidentally that was almost directly under the place where the initial crashing thump originated, but he slept through that and the following noise quite undisturbed.*

---

For a moment, I was considering the thought of powers from "Dave's" subconscious mind manifesting themselves, until I read:

Quote:

---

***That was that. Needless to say, I was thereafter somewhat chary about going up to the attic alone, even in daylight, but that didn't last too long, and soon I was back up there playing. That is until the next time the "ghost" manifested itself in the house--a year later and when I was absolutely alone.***

---

***Cheerio,***  
***Gary***

---

So since I know you're wanting someone to ask, and I want to hear the next story...

Would you care to tell us all of this next manifestation?

:)

---

clockworkjoe

Saturday, 21st September, 2002, 07:37 PM

Question: Most D&D adventures revolve around a fairly standard plot like retrieve item X from place Y or defeat NPC A and so forth. What kind of adventures or campaigns do you think haven't been given proper justice by the RPG industry or you would just like to see more of?

---

Anabstercorian

Saturday, 21st September, 2002, 07:53 PM

A few quick questions:

1) Where did the Mind Flayer come from?

2) You've repeatedly said that 3e D&D is so far in design philosophy and rules from OD&D as to have essentially no link between them, and I agree with that, but do you think there are any parts of 3e D&D, rules-wise, that could be transplanted in to OD&D that would improve it without changing its old school flavor?

3) How do you explain hit points, or do you even bother?

4) In 3e, there's one big goal - Become the hardest bastard you can (I.E., gain power and lots of it.) What were the big goals in OD&D? Wealth? Land? Nobility?

---

Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 21st September, 2002, 08:33 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by clockworkjoe*

**Question: Most D&D adventures revolve around a fairly standard plot like retrieve item X from place Y or defeat NPC A and so forth. What kind of adventures or campaigns do you think haven't been given proper justice by the RPG industry or you would just like to see more of?**

---

As with fiction, there are only so many plots. Unlike writing stories, though, the RPG medium is narrower, for only so many of the standard ones will fit the vehicle and entertain the target audience.

Delving into the areas that I consider as untapped and potentially interesting to gamers is something I won't do, of course. Sort of like giving away my stock in trade.

I will add that the upcoming HALL OF MANY PANES adventure module does treat a wide variety of adventure themes within the greater whole. Maybe after you've assessed that you might want to comment on some of the things I presented therein ;)

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 21st September, 2002, 08:49 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Anabstercorian*

**A few quick questions:**

**1) Where did the Mind Flayer come from?**

**2) You've repeatedly said that 3e D&D is so far in design philosophy and rules from OD&D as to have essentially no link between them, and I agree with that, but do you think there are any parts of 3e D&D, rules-wise, that could be transplanted in to OD&D that would improve it without changing its old school flavor?**

**3) How do you explain hit points, or do you even bother?**

**4) In 3e, there's one big goal - Become the hardest bastard you can (I.E., gain power and lots of it.) What were the big goals in OD&D? Wealth? Land? Nobility?**

---

Pretty good oones too, I add:)

1) I was reading Brian Lumley's THE BURROWERS BENEATH, and the cover made me think "Now what sort of nasty bastard is that? So, without a qualm I made up the Illithid, the dreaded mind flayer, so as to keep the players on their toes--or have their PCs turn their's upwards :D

2) To properly answer that I would have to sit down and re-read the final versions of both the PHB and the DMG. It's been a couple of years to so since I read the working drafts. Just from "design instinct," though, I'd say no, but some underlying ideas might be used. Then again, the same is true for a number of non-D&D games...

3) That's easy. HPs represent not only the physical person, but that one's luck, skill in avoiding damage. As luck runs low, muscles tire, and reflexes slow their measure, HPs. are lost to reflect this. The last few remaining are the actual physical body being harmed. Okay, its rationalizing, but it works pretty well, I think;)

4) In OAD&D there was plenty of play aimed at power, just as there is in 3E. Of course those that I knew as "good" players aimed first and foremost at having fun playing the game, regardless of rise in rabk and all the rest that goes with power gaming. The challenge of each session was enjoyed more from a group perspective, likely. As the team prospered, so too the enjoyment, camaraderie, and resulting stories. Many a group downplayed combat, developed campaigns in which roleplay was the key. Politics and economics? Sure. While OAD&D certainly focused on combat mechanics and rules, it did not hinder other sorts of play. The XP system in 3E does that with a vengeance.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 21st September, 2002, 09:19 PM

Re: Re: TRUE "GHOST" STORY

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Khan the Warlord*

:P

**Entertaining story, Gary!**

---

Thanks, amigo:)

Quote:

---

***For a moment, I was considering the thought of powers from "Dave's" subconscious mind manifesting themselves, until I read:***

***So since I know you're wanting someone to ask, and I want to hear the next story...***

---

Truth to tell, I thought the same thing myself some years back, and came to the same place you did. Unless the various manifestations were totally unrelated to the initial one. there isn't any likelihood that friend David was responsible for the first.

Quote:

---

*[B]Would you care to tell us all of this next manifestation?*

*:) [/B]*

---

The next one really terrorized me. I have recounted it elsewhere, but I'll do so again here.

It was in the late fall when I was age 10. A bleak November day, and after school I returned home to an empty house. My mother had to drive into a suburb of Chicago, and she wouldn't return home until around 6:30 PM. So there I was alone. No playing outside because it was too nasty and no snow yet, my buddy next door and I were on the outs--typical kids' stuff--so I decided to read.

I opened one of the bookcases in the living room, looked at spine titles, decided on something scary and so pulled out Edgar Allen Poe's "Tales of Terror" from the complete set of his works my grandfather had purchased before I was born. Taking it to grandfather's armchair, I switched on the floor lamp sat down, flipped through the table of contents, and opted for "The Fall of the House of Usher." I started reading. My white tom cat, Queball by name, hopped up into my lap, settled down comfortably. All was well to that point and for some half-hour after.

Just as I was reading the passage where the sounds from the crypt below the House of Usher were frightening the protagonist, the cat dug its foreclaws into my leg. Ouch! I looked from book to cat. The cat was staring fixedly at the door to my left, some 15 feet distant. It was a bit ajar, lead into what had been the maid's room, in my time a day or sewing room. What on earth could that blasted cat be staring at?

Horror of horrors! As I stared at the door trying to figure out just what might cause the cat to react thus, I saw out of the corner of my eye that Queball was now rising, ears laid flat, back arched, and tail up, fur horripilated in full "Halloween cat" fashion. Worse, my eyes saw the door move inwards into the totally dark room beyond. Had my short hair not been already been brushed upwards, it too would have risen as had the cat's. I was paralyzed with fear, and it got worse. The oak floorboards creaked as if someone was walking from the now-open door straight into the room and up to beside my chair, only there was nothing to be seen.

I don't think my teeth chattered, but I'll bet my eyes were popping. All I could do was sit there in shock as the cat stood its ground hissed and growled in his most menacing fashion.

After what seemed long minutes, but more likely was a few seconds, Queball ceased his defensive performance, settled back down on my lap, and started purring. Whew!

With that I got up, unceremoniously dumping my benefactor in my haste. Immediately after turning on all the lamps in the living room, I illuminated the dining room chandelier, the kitchen lights, then the front hall. Making a dash to my bedroom upstairs, I turned on the lights there, got my bow and arrows, machette too, and ran back downstairs to sit in a chair at the front end of the living room, awwor ready, eyes fixed on the offending doorway at the far end of the room, maybe 30 feet distant.

there my mother found me when she returned. She said little other than to reassure me that nothing like that in the house would harm me. Despite that I was more than a tad nervous when alone in the dark there.

Of course when some years later my brother's fiancée had some concerns, and the experience of friends staying over, I took comfort in what mother had said. Nothing ever touched \*me\*...

Cheerio,  
Gary

## Q&A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Page 19 of 36   First   ...   9   10   11   12   13   14   15   16   17   18   19   20   21   22   23   24   25   26   27   28   29   ...   Last

Breakdaddy

Saturday, 21st September, 2002, 11:08 PM

Whoa! That would've freaked me out too! Thats along the lines of some of those ghost stories you hear on the Art Bell show (I think thats the guys name, Im not an avid listener). Ive listened a couple of times when I was up that late and one of the ghost encounters that was recounted there was a real hair raiser.

Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 21st September, 2002, 11:45 PM

Right Breakdaddy!

Being in a place that has such manifestations is not usually pleasane. There's a major mansion here on the lake, divided up into condos now, one of which I lived in for a couple of years.Despite its marvelous location, substantial building, lake view, somehow the place manages to remain deserted of habitation most of the time...

I would not care to move back if they gave me a free unit :eek:

Gary

thegolem

Sunday, 22nd September, 2002, 12:31 AM

Gary,

I've been enjoying D&D for going on fifteen years or so now, so I just want to start out by saying thanks for bringing it into this world. It's always been a great creative outlet that I've found invaluable in learning writing and reading skills. I think the fact that D&D involves so much reading is nearly directly responsible for my above-average english skills throughout middle and high school.

Aside from that thanks, I also want to say thank you for spending some time here with us. I haven't had any questions to ask, but I'm eagerly checking this thread daily to see the new responses you've posted; I appreciate your time, thanks!

And finally, you've sold me on trying Lejendary Adventures. My brother owns a game store up here in Canada, so I'm going to have him order me a copy and check it out. Rules-light is what I love. Right now, we play an almost rules-free CoC campaign, which we're all particularly enjoying (including three new roleplayers!), so I'm eager to see if LA can give me a great rules-light fantasy setting.

Anyhow, I guess I'll finish with one question, just to keep in the spirit of the thread: Obviously when it comes to a completed manuscript you type on the computer. However, I'm wondering if you do a lot of 'idea work', brainstorming, etc. in handwritten form? I find I write a lot better on paper than on the computer espicallywhen composing from my imagination. Have you found that the advent of computer technology has greatly benefited you as a creative worker, or that its had not too much of an affect at all?

I know you've said its your pleasure to respond here, but, once again, thanks so much!

Peter Miller

ColonelHardisson

Sunday, 22nd September, 2002, 12:38 AM

Hey Gary - you should try to get on Art Bell's show...

MerricB

Sunday, 22nd September, 2002, 02:07 AM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

*While OAD&D certainly focused on combat mechanics and rules, it did not hinder other sorts of play. The XP system in 3E does that with a vengeance.*

Of course, OAD&D's XP system promoted the gaining of treasure above all else. :) At least there are plenty of ideas in the 3E DMG for changing the XP system, and more online.

Is that comment due to (a) the rate of advancement in 3E, (b) that XP is given only for overcoming monsters, (c) some other reason, or (d) some combination of (a), (b) and/or (c)?

On a related topic, what are the highest level OAD&D characters you've played or DMed? (That have started at a low level and worked their way upwards, of course!)

How are your sons enjoying being World Famous Game Designers? ;)

Cheers!



Great thread you have going here Gary! I'm enjoying it tremendously...

I am DMing a new campaign and have some new players, one a fellow by the name of Chris Zephro who played with Luke quite often back since Jr. High School ( in LA ). I was wondering if you might have any stories I might embarrass him with, or if you know of any particular monster phobias of his... :p

Also, as a longtime D&D Fanboy, I have always respected and feared the great Demon DEMOGORGON, and have been dissapointed that he has seen such limited print since 1E ( None of my players have ever lived through an encounter with him BTW ). Do you rememeber Demogorgon's origin? Did he spring from your twisted, yet brilliant mind? Any details about his creation and/or usage in your gaming would be appreciated!

Thanks and Regards,

Joe Stoken

---

## ScottGLXIX

Sunday, 22nd September, 2002, 05:13 AM

Thought I'd join in on the interrogation. I'm curious about this quote from the DMG, "In my own Greyhawk Campaign there have been 9 demigods, 3 demon lords, and a handful of Norse and other gods involved in the course of many years of play. Once or twice there has been divine intervention--and twice the powers of the infernal region have come at the mention of a certain name....". The 9 demigods would be the famous 9 that Robilar released, one of the demon lords is Frazz-Urb Luu, I know Zeus made a cameo during the same encounter, but he chose to ignore the Unnamed's plea for help and left him to the demon lord's tender mercies. Were Lolth or Zuggtmoy included here? I heard a story of a young Robilar being saved by "divine intervention" when he was about to meet his end at the hands of two wights. I'm guessing one of the powers of the infernal region may have been Asmodeous when Erac's Cousin made his pact. Could you provide any more information on who the powers mentioned above may have been? The demon lords and the powers of the infernal region are the ones I'm most curious about.

Ciao,  
Scott

---

## Hypersmurf

Sunday, 22nd September, 2002, 01:01 PM

Gary,

I've always thought it was fantastic the way you provided some of the "game mechanics" details in the afterword of *Saga of Old City*. Wish you'd continued the practice with the other novels :)

But there was one in SoOC that didn't make the afterword. Gellor is gifted with a sword that purported to be invisible when wielded. I loved the idea - I don't recall it actually being showcased "in use" in the novel, but the concept was great.

Did you use a similar item in one of your own games? And if so... what sort of game mechanics were involved?

-Hyp.

---

## Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 22nd September, 2002, 03:16 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by thegolem*  
**Gary,**

*I've been enjoying D&D for going on fifteen years or so now, so I just want to start out by saying thanks for bringing it into this world. It's always been a great creative outlet that I've found invaluable in learning writing and reading skills. I think the fact that D&D involves so much reading is nearly directly responsible for my above-average english skills throughout middle and high school.*

*Aside from that thanks, I also want to say thank you for spending some time here with us. I haven't had any questions to ask, but I'm eagerly checking this thread daily to see the new responses you've posted; I appreciate your time, thanks!*

---

Sure Peter, and you are most welcome. As I've said, I really enjoyed doing the design work on games. This is fun for me too, so as with any good game, we are sharing the enjoyment ;)

Quote:

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*And finally, you've sold me on trying Legendary Adventures. My brother owns a game store up here in Canada, so I'm going to have him order me a copy and check it out. Rules-light is what I love. Right now, we play an almost rules-free CoC campaign, which we're all particularly enjoying (including three new roleplayers!), so I'm eager to see if LA can give me a great rules-light fantasy setting.*

---

I do hope you like the treatment. It is very different from D&D, and thus the changed patoise for the LA game. You'll need to think differently, in its terms, to really get into it. However, as you state you play CoC generally winging it, the way I played D&D and now LA, likely you'll absorb the new material pretty easily. I don't urge dedicated D&D players who love that system (whichever one they use) to play the LA game, unless they want an accassional change of pace. If someone is having fun with a game why change?

Quote:

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*Anyhow, I guess I'll finish with one question, just to keep in the spirit of the thread: Obviously when it comes to a completed manuscript you type on the computer. However, I'm wondering if you do a lot of 'idea work', brainstorming, etc. in handwritten form? I find I write a lot better on paper than on the computer espicallywhen composing from my imagination. Have you found that the advent of computer technology has greatly benefited you as a creative worker, or that its had not too much of an affect at all?*

---



Many a time I do make notes on whatever paper is handy. This is especially true when I am doing inspirational or research reading. It really helps to do that when you are not absolutely certain as to what the final form of the work will be. From the notes I then go to the computer, enter the material in a more formal form, then use it that way, or as a basis for yet a third approach to the subject.

The outlines I sometimes do--for rules this is typically a must--are likewise mutable. If they don't work I just forget their order, use the points that work, delete and/or add new.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 22nd September, 2002, 03:18 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by ColonelHardisson*  
**Hey Gary - you should try to get on Art Bell's show...**

---

Thanks, Colonel, but sharing with friends and fellow gamers suffices. I really don't want a larger audience and the likely attendant bother from some listeners...

Ciao,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 22nd September, 2002, 03:30 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by M erdB*

***Of course, OAD&D's XP system promoted the gaining of treasure above all else. :) At least there are plenty of ideas in the 3E DMG for changing the XP system, and more online.***

***Is that comment due to (a) the rate of advancement in 3E, (b) that XP is given only for overcoming monsters, (c) some other reason, or (d) some combination of (a), (b) and/or (c)?***

***On a related topic, what are the highest level OAD&D characters you've played or DMed? (That have started at a low level and worked their way upwards, of course!)***

***How are your sons enjoying being World Famous Game Designers? ;)***

***Cheers!***

---

Indeed, the wealth was featured--most realistically if one considers human motivations. If you, the real you, were an adventurerer, what would motivate you more than the lure of riches? Sure, altruistic things, honor, patriotism and the like come into play, but most adventures are based on the lure of treasure. Note also that casting spells earned XPs, as did successful performance of various class abilities not related to fighting. But enough comparative analysis.

I have played a PC of over 20th but less than 30th level. Advancement of that particular character came because of long play and some pretty clever stuff done therein, if I do say so myself. I have DMed for some higher level PCs, and my observation was that the players really didn't have the expertise to have gained such level in my campaign. the highest level ever gained in my campaign is around 20th. Some players could have gotten above the level their best PC had attained, but they preferred to play several, as I have always done, and keep the levels lower.

AS for Ernie and Luke, there was much grumbling over the amount of work needed to create a large module. Both were quite proud of their final result, and I thought justly so, as THE LOST CITY OF GAXMOOR was a lot of fun to play. Ernie is too involved in his day job now to do more design work, Luke also, but I am encouraging them to complete the adventure with a LOST UNDERCITY module. Maybe Luke will manage it, but not in short order, shall we say...

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 22nd September, 2002, 03:48 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by BigFreekinGoblinoid*  
**Great thread you have going here Gary! I'm enjoying it tremendously...**

---

***I am DMed a new campaign and have some new players, one a fellow by the name of Chris Zephro who played with Luke quite often back since Jr. High School ( in LA ). I was wondering if you might have any stories I might embarrass him with, or if you know of any particular monster phobias of his... :p***

***Also, as a longtime D&D Fanboy, I have always respected and feared the great Demon DEMOGORGON, and have been dissapointed that he has seen such limited print since 1E ( None of my players have ever lived through an encounter with him BTW ). Do you rememeber Demogorgon's origin? Did he spring from your twisted, yet brilliant mind? Any details about his creation and/or usage in your gaming would be appreciated!***

*Thanks and Regards,*

*Joe Stoken*

---

Heh, Joe, I remember well and fondly Chris and the others that were Luke's buddies, stayed overnight "up on the hill" and played "ninja" and other kids' games there as well as AD&D with me as the DM. A really great group of lads even when they work me up at 3 AM banging on a big gong that was just below my bedroom.

In those days, Chris always wore a blackj T-shirt with some heavy metal rock band featured on it:)

The most notable adventure I can come up with immediately is the one where I had the party in an Oriental-type setting, and as they were involved in play what should happen but Arabian music starts playing from somewhere in the house, and shortly thereafter a real live belly dancer appears. Heh:D It was Luke's birthday, so I hired same for his and his friends' entertainment. All the lads were indeed most fascinated.

BTW, Chris is lately in touch with Luke again after a hiatus of some years. Ken Sato, another of the gang, was also in touch some years back but has not been heard from for some time. Chris and I have exchanged a couple of emails just recently.

As for Demogorgon, I fond the name in mythical demonologies, devided to make him the biggest of the demon baddies, and made up the detailsand the stats. He shouldn't be too difficult to translate into 3E, if you are now playing that...just a lot of detail work.

Cheers,  
Gary

---

MerricB

Sunday, 22nd September, 2002, 04:00 PM

G'day Gary!

I've just been using your Random Dungeon tables in the 1E DMG to create an "on-the-fly" dungeon for my players, due to a couple of decisions they made that surprised me.

Lots of fun was had by all - I must thank you heartily for those tables, and the additional suggestions for tricks in the DMG appendices! A couple of 'elevator' rooms have confused the mapper mightily, and the final encounter with an intelligent throne with the powers of sex-change, gem-granting and teleportation have led to a cliff-hanger where the mapper has been teleported off onto a solo quest. The other characters haven't yet realised he has the only map... ;)

XP for casting spells in OAD&D? I must have missed that, as I've never seen it used - or perhaps it's one of the many features of your campaign that wasn't in the original rules. :) Not that it matters!

Gaining treasure is muchly on the mind of my players at the moment, as they've finally reached a position where they each want their own stronghold, whether monastery, castle, thieves' guild or similar. And of course, such things are expensive! And I'm making much reference to the few paragraphs in the 1E DMG about terrain clearing, and the 3E Stronghold Builder guide for costs...

One thing that I've been wondering recently is if you read any of the newer fantasy or science-fiction books, or are you too busy with creating or other things?

Cheers!

---

Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 22nd September, 2002, 04:03 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by ScottGLXIX*

*Thought I'd join in on the interrogation. I'm curious about this quote from the DMG, "In my own Greyhawk Campaign there have been 9 demigods, 3 demon lords, and a handful of Norse and other gods involved in the course of many years of play. Once or twice there has been divine intervention--and twice the powers of the infernal region have come at the mention of a certain name....". The 9 demigods would be the famous 9 that Robilar released, one of the demon lords is Frazz-Urb Luu, I know Zeus made a cameo during the same encounter, but he chose to ignore the Unnamed's plea for help and left him to the demon lord's tender mercies. Were Lolth or Zugtmoy included here? I heard a story of a young Robilar being saved by "divine intervention" when he was about to meet his end at the hands of two wights. I'm guessing one of the powers of the infernal region may have been Asmodeous when Erac's Cousin made his pact. Could you provide any more information on who the powers mentioned above may have been? The demon lords and the powers of the infernal region are the ones I'm most curious about.*

*Ciao,  
Scott*

---

Scott, are you sure your laundry list is complete? Bah! (and LOL)

The 9 demigods/gods are indeed those released by robilar.

Frazz-Urb Luu was freed by Erac's Cousin and a paladin, heh-heh-heh. I intend to tell that little tale in a DRAGON zne column. Yes, Zeus made a brief appearance than and left with a shrug, none there honoring him.

Lolth never made any appearances, but Zugtmoy did. When Robilar freed her (yes, he again loosed another deital figure) she was grateful, took him off to her layer of the Abyss to be one of her favored servants... Robilar, and he was a veteran adventurer at this time, was not a happy camper then.

I don't recall the tale of Robilar's rescue from the wights, but I can relate something more amusing.

In one tournament session at a Autumn Revel, as I recall, a team managed to bring Asmodeus to their location. In desperation, one of their number called for a diety opposed to that devil to come to them. Being a kindly DM, I had ORcus arrive instanter. Oddly, the party were not in the least happy that I allowed such "divine intervention." I suppose it is because the two Evil beings took stock of the situation, saw no reason to

fight amongst themselves, and simply divided up the "spoils" between them and left...

As has been noted often, being careful what one wishes for, pleads for in the above case, is a good idea.

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 22nd September, 2002, 04:12 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Hypersmurf*  
**Gary,**

***I've always thought it was fantastic the way you provided some of the "game mechanics" details in the afterword of Saga of Old City. Wish you'd continued the practice with the other novels :)***

***But there was one in SoOC that didn't make the afterword. Gellor is gifted with a sword that purported to be invisible when wielded. I loved the idea - I don't recall it actually being showcased "in use" in the novel, but the concept was great.***

***Did you use a similar item in one of your own games? And if so... what sort of game mechanics were involved?***

***-Hyp.***

---

Thanks Amigo:)

After ARTIFACT, I was precluded from adding AD&D material to the stories, of course.

As for the invisible sword that Gellor had, it was not in play in my campaign--not to say I hadn't maybe placed one somewhere;) Aside from its plusses to hit and damage, the weapon allowed its wielder to see any otherwise invisible foe and to attack first in any normal exchange. Of course there was a command word for it to come to hand--pretty hard to locate your invisible sword without that... If it was within range of the possessor's voice it would fly instantly to that own's hand.

Ciao,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 22nd September, 2002, 04:33 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by MerricB*  
**G'day Gary!**

G'Day MAtel

Almost missed your post as it came sandwiched between my current string of replies.

Quote:

---

***I've just been using your Random Dungeon tables in the 1E DMG to create an "on-the-fly" dungeon for my players, due to a couple of decisions they made that surprised me.***

***Lots of fun was had by all - I must thank you heartily for those tables, and the additional suggestions for tricks in the DMG appendices! A couple of 'elevator' rooms have confused the mapper mightily, and the final encounter with an intelligent throne with the powers of sex-change, gem-granting and teleportation have led to a cliff-hanger where the mapper has been teleported off onto a solo quest. The other characters haven't yet realised he has the only map... :)***

---

Happy to hear that, and I did indeed use the same for more than a few "scratch" adventures done on the fly. I feely admit I love to DM dungeons where exploration is at least as important as the encounters, solving the problems and defeating the tricks and traps a major feature of the whole.

Rob had some very nasty stuff like that in his dungeons, and I swan I am still at a loss as to one. It seemed every time my PC would pick up a loose gem--usually not more than 1-100 GP value, but sometimes greater, so the lure was irresistible--he'd soon be teleported to some other place, sometimes a most unpleasant one. Never did figure out if it was the gems proper or some other nearby thing that activated the transference:)

Quote:

---

***XP for casting spells in OAD&D? I must have missed that, as I've never seen it used - or perhaps it's one of the many features of your campaign that wasn't in the original rules. :) Not that it matters!***

---

Now I could swear that's in the rules somewhere, maybe UA? Anyway, we always played it as 100 XP per level of the spell cast--usefully in an adventure or to assist someone during or after, so clerics were rewarded as well as m-us.

Quote:

---

***Gaining treasure is muchly on the mind of my players at the moment, as they've finally reached a position where they each want their own stronghold, whether monastary, castle, thieves' guild or similar. And of course, such things are expensive! And I'm making much reference to the few paragraphs in the 1E DMG about terrain clearing, and the 3E Stronghold Builder guide for costs...***

---

Right! Having a base of operations changes the whole thrust of the campaign. Be prepared for more solo adventures, and ready the forces of hostile NPCs to assail those places :D

The subject wasn't treated in great detail by me bacuuse of lack of hands-on experience of considerable sort. With a mix of groups being DMed for, the state of each was such that most were stil adventuring in dungeons, cities, and the outdoors. Only a few PCs had attained sufficient wealth and level so as to look towards establishing their own strongholds.

Quote:

---

***One thing that I've been wondering recently is if you read any of the newer fantasy or science-fiction books, or are you too busy with creating or other things?***

***Cheers!***

---

Not many of the contemporary fantasy authors interest me. Vance still writes, and he is still my favorite. I like the "Diskworld" novels, of course, and believe me, there is something like "Luggage" now in the lists of Extraordinary Items" to be found by Avatars adventuring in the LA game universe:)

I am about half of the way through a Harry Turtledove alternate history novel now, WORLDWAR. I find it a tad choppy so I need to read more slowly than usual, but so far I really enjoy it, so I'll likely be picking up all of his alternate history works.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

clockworkjoe

Sunday, 22nd September, 2002, 05:04 PM

threemore questions: Which monster from d&d beside dragons and the various infernal species are your players scared of the most?

What was doing the cameo on futurama like?

And where did the beholder come from?

---

Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 22nd September, 2002, 05:23 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by clockworkjoe*

***threemore questions: Which monster from d&d beside dragons and the various infernal species are your players scared of the most?***

***What was doing the cameo on futurama like?***

***And where did the beholder come from?***

---

When it comes to the relative degree of fear amongst players caused by monsters, that depends on the expertise of the players, the level of the PCs, and the situation. As I have mentioned, I have made a goodly number of players with low level PCs fear and respect the kobolds in my uppermost dungeon level. Usually, though, the unidentified monster(s), undead when there is no cleric in the group, or NACs are the banes that cause nervous responses.

Fact is, when I was playing a PC a couple of years back we encountered a wind walker, and my 19th level m-u was not prepared for that, couldn't recall the means of dealing with that critter, and I was not exactly comfortable with the situation :)

In the FUTURAMA show episode I appeared in cartoon illustrated likeness, with my voice. I was part of a team led by Al Gore, and with me were Stephen Hawking and Nichelle Nichols. I can't really describe it adaquately, so you need to see it.

The beholder was the original conception of Terry Kuntz, Rob's brother, a regular in the early days of my campaign. I developed it a bit, but it's essentially his work:)

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

jgbrowning

Sunday, 22nd September, 2002, 10:01 PM

ok

my questions..

how do you remember all this stuff about what you and the other early guys did? I'm lucky if i can remember more than two campaigns ago.

if you got one wish, what would you wish for? :) hehehe.. and how would you WORD it? :D

joe b.

---

Tarek

Monday, 23rd September, 2002, 07:31 AM

Lendore Isle

I know Len Lakofka did a lot of work on the Suel and on the Lendore Isle area, but I was thinking maybe you'd know the answer to this question:

The city of glass/Gates of Glass on Lendore Isle were meant to be used in the event of some "ultimate calamity." Do you know what that calamity was supposed to be?

Also, the recent Living Greyhawk Guide had a line about Boccob worrying about the slow decline of magic in the Flannaess and his suspicion that Tharizduun was behind it. Was this "decline of magic" part of your original campaign, or was this a theme introduced by recent writers?

Finally, for this round of questions anyway :-), what was the origin of Tharizduun? (apart from the module Forgotten Temple, that is :-) )

Tarek

All times are GMT +1. The time now is 03:13 PM.

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## Q&amp;A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Page 20 of 36 First ... 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 ... Last

MerricB

Monday, 23rd September, 2002, 02:07 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh* Now I could swear that's in the rules somewhere, maybe UA? Anyway, we always played it as 100 XP per level of the spell cast--usefully in an adventure or to assist someone during or after, so clerics were rewarded as well as m-us.

G'day, Gary!

No, I can't seem to find it anywhere. (Actually, not quite true - a similar rule exists as an option in the 2E dmg!) ;)

The rules I can find on granting XP are:

- \* monster XP
- \* treasure XP
- \* special bonus for dying & being raised XP.

Were there any other class-based XP awards you use?

On a related topic, until recently, I thought treasure XP was awarded the same way as monster XP, that is, evenly amongst the party members. Looking through a couple of rules about henchmen made me think I was mistaken: instead XP was granted for treasure depending on how much the *individual* managed to acquire. Is that right?

:)

Diving into my Greyhawk books, (in reference to Tarek's query), the Foreword to the Glossography in the 1983 boxed set has a section that reads: "*During Smedger's time, magic was not a lost art, but, apparently, a fading one.*" The foreword is signed by Steve Winter & Allen Hammack. It is even possible one of them wrote that passage. ;) The topic causes hotly contested debate on Greytalk whenever it turns up, much like whether the Oerth goes round the sun, or the sun goes round the Oerth.

Gary - the Oerth isn't flat, is it? ;)

Oh, and thanks to RJK managing to re-release some of his modules, I'm getting an idea of how fiendish the man can be. Your poor characters have my sympathy. :)

Cheers!

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 23rd September, 2002, 05:12 PM

Re: ok

Quote:

*Originally posted by jgbrowning*  
**my questions..**

**how do you remember all this stuff about what you and the other early guys did? I'm lucky if I can remember more than two campaigns ago.**

**if you got one wish, what would you wish for? :) hehehe.. and how would you WORD it? :D**

**joe b.**

First, amigo, I have to admit that I have what I now understand to be a most unusual memory. I can recall incidents from before I could walk, the time I first walked (ran rather, as I tried to do that and made it about three steps), and so forth. I won't bore you with any more of that, though.

Some of the gaming incidents stand out, others I need to ruminate for long periods in order to recall them. I also will check with someone involved in an incident in order to see if my recollection is correct--or to get something vaguely recalled right.

We played so much that in truth I can't remember 90% or more of what happened, and the accounts are the incidents that were truly exceptional.

Cheerio,  
Gary

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 23rd September, 2002, 05:20 PM

Re: Lendore Isle

Quote:

*Originally posted by Tarek*

*I know Len Lakofka did a lot of work on the Suel and on the Lendore Isle area, but I was thinking maybe you'd know the answer to this question:*

*The city of glass/Gates of Glass on Lendore Isle were meant to be used in the event of some "ultimate calamity." Do you know what that calamity was supposed to be?*

*Also, the recent Living Greyhawk Guide had a line about Boccob worrying about the slow decline of magic in the Flannaess and his suspicion that Tharizduun was behind it. Was this "decline of magic" part of your original campaign, or was this a theme introduced by recent writers?*

*Finally, for this round of questions anyway :-), what was the origin of Tharizduun? (apart from the module Forgotten Temple, that is :-))*

*Tarek*

---

I strike out on two of the above, Tarek. Len kept his campaign material close to his chest, just as I did mine save when it was ripe to publish a bit of it, so I don't have a clue as to what he was doing there. Why not ask him?

What the guts are doing in Living Greyhawk is strictly their own creation, and it is not related to any of my own thinking.

As for Bit T, well, I decided a really nasty and wholly evil deity was needed, so I created Tharizduun from whole cloth. When I wrote the FTOT I had that in mind, and from there I developed him into what I hope is a truly dispicable entity.

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 23rd September, 2002, 05:41 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by MerricB*

*G'day, Gary!*

*No, I can't seem to find it anywhere. (Actually, not quite true - a similar rule exists as an option in the 2E dmg!)* ;)

*The rules I can find on granting XP are:*

*\* monster XP*

*\* treasure XP*

*\* special bonus for dying & being raised XP.*

*Were there any other class-based XP awards you use?*

---

And just a bit back I was near to boasting of my mnemonic capacity... :rolleyes:

Well, I certainly did hand out XPs in my campaign for spell use, also successful tracking by rangers, use of thief abilities by any PC so doing, that sort of thing.

As I left behind when I split with TSR various documents regarding a revision of the AD&D game, I wonder if perhaps amongst them I had written the information regarding XPs. Ah well, not much of a matter now anyway... ;)

Quote:

---

*On a related topic, until recently, I thought treasure XP was awarded the same way as monster XP, that is, evenly amongst the party members. Looking through a couple of rules about henchmen made me think I was mistaken: instead XP was granted for treasure depending on how much the individual managed to acquire. Is that right?*

*:)*

---

Actually, as the DM I left it up to the players. Generally they took all treasure as property of the party, then at the conclusion of an adventure divided it in shares according to the total number of levels of the PCs involved, counting half of any multi-classed PCs levels only as addition the the highest single class one, i.e. a F/T/MU of 8/4/10 levels would get 4+2+10 shares of the loot.

Magic was always selected by high d% roll, each player getting a roll for each level of his or her PC--in the above example 16 rolls saving the highest. Prcks then went from highest on down. Many a tie of 00 rolls occurred. In such case the top scorers rolled off for order of picks.

Quote:

---

*Diving into my Greyhawk books, (in reference to Tarek's query), the Foreword to the Glossography in the 1983 boxed set has a section that reads: "During Smedgar's time, magic was not a lost art, but, apparently, a fading one." The foreword is signed by Steve Winter & Allen Hammack. It is even possible one of them wrote that passage. ;) The topic causes hotly contested debate on Greytalk whenever it turns up, much like whether the Oerth goes round the sun, or the sun goes round the Oerth.*

---

Likely the two named individuals wrote that bit, certainly! Why they did is known only to Messrs. Winter and HAMmack, of course. "Smedgar" was Frank Mentzer.

There is no question in my mind as to the Oerth and the sun. Oerth revolves around the sun.

Quote:

---

**Gary - the Oerth isn't flat, is it? ;)**

**Oh, and thanks to RJK managing to re-release some of his modules, I'm getting an idea of how fiendish the man can be. Your poor characters have my sympathy. :)**

**Cheers!**

---

Oerth is a sphere, and it might be hollow...

Rob learned from me, then added all sorts of horrid nuiances and completely new devices to his store of cruel things to wreak upon PCs. As he did that, I recipriocated, and so our games were lively matters indeed. One face sharpens the other :D

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

ScottGLXIX

Monday, 23rd September, 2002, 09:05 PM

I notice that there are no thieves of note in the who's who of Greyhawk. I can't think of one well known thief PC. How did the early PCs go about finding and removing traps and opening locks?  
Scott

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 23rd September, 2002, 09:56 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by ScottGLXIX*

**I notice that there are no thieves of note in the who's who of Greyhawk. I can't think of one well known thief PC. How did the early PCs go about finding and removing traps and opening locks?**

**Scott**

---

Well, some of the less caring PCs had orcs who were sent forth to take care of such things. Others of the PCs had henchmen who were of the thire class. There were also such things as wands of secret door & trap detection ann knock spells for the m-us.

As an aside, and pertaining to the question of treasure division, there was an unwritten understanding that any thief who made off with a reasonably small amount of the loot, that including monor magic items, was "unnoticed" and the spoils and XPs that went with them were that PCs. Thieves that were too greedy didn't last long, though...

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Daiymo

Tuesday, 24th September, 2002, 01:02 AM

Greetings Gary!

You spoke earlier about mind flayers, so I have a question about the Gith races, my favorite outsider type monster race(no doubt due to their being prominently featured on the cover of the old Fiend Folio).

I dont know how much input you had in the gith's development, but where did the idea of these two warring races(the yanki and zeraï) come from?

---

Tarek

Tuesday, 24th September, 2002, 04:54 AM

Lenard Lakofka

Gary--

Thanks for your reply. Certainly, in the newest incarnation of the D&D game, Tharizduun is playing a major role; from Return to the Temple of Elemental Evil to the Living Greyhawk campaign, we're seeing T's cultists all over.

As for getting in touch with Mr. Lakofka, I'm having trouble even finding out if he has a presence on the net. I know he wrote two articles for Canonfire and the Oerth Journal, but that was a few years back. I understand he's also a major figure in the Diplomacy world, but again, I can't find anything recent from him.

Tarek

---

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 24th September, 2002, 03:23 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Daiymo*

**Greetings Gary!**

**You spoke earlier about mind flayers, so I have a question about the Gith races, my favorite outsider type monster race(no doubt due to their being prominently featured on the cover of the old Fiend Folio).**

**I dont know how much input you had in the gith's development, but where did the idea of these two warring races(the yanki and zeraï) come from?**

---



Where are Steve Jackson (the Brit) and Ian Livingston when you need them? Likely living it up in Spain... :eek:

The FIEND FOLIO was compiled by those two, then the owners of GW, from submissions published in WHITE DWARD MAGAZINE, and brought to TSR as material for an additional book of monsters. I culled some, saw that other creatures were added, and then Lawrence Shick, the man in charge of project left in the monsters I'd said must be cut--he was leaving the company so...

Anyway, I agree that the Gith are an interesting racial pair. Only their creator, or Steve & Ian possibly, can give you the inside information you seek.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

MerricB

Tuesday, 24th September, 2002, 03:24 PM

G'day, Gary!

(referencing Daiymo's query)

Peering into my copy of the Fiend Folio, I find that the Githzerai and Githyanki were the invention of one Charles Stross, probably a UK gamer. I don't know if Gary had any hand in producing the FF except for a couple of monsters. I do remember that the adventure The Forgotten Temple of Tharizdun does feature a large number of Fiend Folio creatures - were you trying to help TSR UK along by using them, Gary?

Hmm. I've been looking at my copy of Necropolis d20 again today, wondering about whoever could review it properly. Something I really like about it is the style of writing - I hadn't seen that style before, with asides to the DM in this fashion:

**"Are the Po d f irte a3 3 y e 1 df soaybu've been too lenient, they've been clever, or I've made this module as deadly as I intended..."**

Wonderful stuff! (Note to other DMs: get Necropolis! Note to other players: nag your DMs to get Necropolis! :))

There's a reference in the epilogue to gaining "Special Connections" (allies). Is that a hangover from the Dangerous Journeys game? Were there guidelines/rules in those works for such matters?

Yet another question, I'm afraid. ;) What are your current (active) PCs? (Whatever game, whatever system, of course!)

Cheers!

---

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 24th September, 2002, 03:30 PM

Re: Lenard Lakofka

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Tarek*  
**Gary--**

***Thanks for your reply. Certainly, in the newest incarnation of the D&D game, Tharizduun is playing a major role; from Return to the Temple of Elemental Evil to the Living Greyhawk campaign, we're seeing T's cultists all over.***

***As for getting in touch with Mr. Lakofka, I'm having trouble even finding out if he has a presence on the net. I know he wrote two articles for Canonfire and the Oerth Journal, but that was a few years back. I understand he's also a major figure in the Diplomacy world, but again, I can't find anything recent from him.***

***Tarek***

---

Heh... Cults of worshippers of Tharizdun must needs be those with an extreme death wish...

Right in regards to Len. Have you tried a websearch? Fact is I haven't heard from himin over a year. The whole of my email addy book got blown out about a year back, so Len's went with it, and I not having heard from Len since, I can't email him about this thread.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

MerricB

Tuesday, 24th September, 2002, 03:33 PM

Quote:

---

*Where are Steve Jackson (the Brit) and Ian Livingston when you need them? Likely living it up in Spain... :eek:*

---

Republishing the Fighting Fantasy books at the moment, actually. :) The first four of the reprints (Warlock of Firetop Mountain, Citadel of Chaos, Deathtrap Dungeon & Creature of Havoc) have just arrived on the shelves of many bookstores Down Under.

See the [icon books](#) website.

Did you ever look at them, Gary? I've very fond memories of the Warlock of Firetop Mountain...

Cheers!

---

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 24th September, 2002, 03:59 PM

Quote:

---

Originally posted by MerricB

**Republishing the Fighting Fantasy books at the moment, actually. :) The first four of the reprints (Warlock of Firetop Mountain, Citadel of Chaos, Deathtrap Dungeon & Creature of Havoc) have just arrived on the shelves of many bookstores Down Under.**

See the [icon books website](#).

**Did you ever look at them, Gary? I've very fond memories of the Warlock of Firetop Mountain...**

**Cheers!**

---

Bet their agent is seeing to the republishing of those books, MerricB, even as they frolic here or there ;)

I was so busy when those books were being published initially that I never did read/play any of them. I did have Steve and Ian as guests at my place--then out in the country west of Lake Geneva. Both assisted me in clearing some vines from the trees surrounding the house. I forgot that a lot of people react badly to handling poison oak--it doesn't bother me much, a small blister if I rub it on my bare skin. Seems as if both of them returned to the UK and had some rather annoying skin outbreaks like poison ivy from their good deed helping me :rolleyes:

Heh,  
Gary

---

Moorcrys

Tuesday, 24th September, 2002, 05:48 PM

Hey Gary,

One of my favorite things about the original AD&D was the illusionist class. In fact, I'm still disappointed with the 'genericized' specialist wizards in both second and 3E (a fireball flinging illusionist? Where's the flavor in that?) As it was such an odd class in the first edition of the game and forfeited a good deal the damaging 'punch' of the magic-user in favor of something subtler, I was wondering if you recall any of the more successful players of illusionists in your earlier games? What was your inspiration for that particular class?

Moorcrys

---

Tarek

Tuesday, 24th September, 2002, 06:24 PM

Getting in touch

Gary--

I did in fact try a web search or two. That's how I found out that Mr. Lakofka was heavily into Diplomacy . :-)

Unfortunately, the web search engines that I used did not pick up any e-mail address for him, not even through the web sites that showed up.

Tarek

---

Theuderic

Tuesday, 24th September, 2002, 06:42 PM

Quick question Gary: have you read any of Margeret Weis & Tracy Hickman's works and if so what did you think of them?

---

tsadkiel

Tuesday, 24th September, 2002, 07:38 PM

Quote:

---

Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh

**Anyway, I agree that the Gith are an interesting racial pair. Only their creator, or Steve & Ian possibly, can give you the inside information you seek.**

---

Here's an interview with Charles Stross about the origins of the Gith races.

[http://www.planewalker.com/loz/mi\\_stross.shtml](http://www.planewalker.com/loz/mi_stross.shtml)

---

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 24th September, 2002, 10:49 PM

Quote:

---

Originally posted by Moorcrys

**Hey Gary,**

**One of my favorite things about the original AD&D was the illusionist class. In fact, I'm still disappointed with the 'genericized' specialist wizards in both second and 3E (a fireball flinging illusionist? Where's the flavor in that?) As it was such an odd class in the first edition of the game and forfeited a good deal the damaging 'punch' of the magic-user in favor of something subtler, I was wondering if you recall any of the more successful players of illusionists in your earlier games? What was your inspiration for that particular class?**

**Moorcrys**

---

Thanks, and I appreciate the good words. The illusionist sub-class sprang from my reading. So many spellworkers in fable and fiction used only the illusory, not "real magic" that had actual substance and effect, that I thought it would be fun to include such an option in the game.

Subtily was indeed a factor in play--and for that reason not a lot of illusionists were active in my campaign. Also, as a "latecomer" to choices, those who did have such PCs were not in the level par with the veteran characters of other class. As I recall, there were a couple of mid-level illusionists, somewhere around 9th-10th level active. Don't recall who played them. Rob might...

As noted previously, I have a gnome illusionist/thief PC, but he is of pretty low level, about 4th in both classes, and I haven't had opportunity to play him for a couple of years, so I'll have the devil of a time finding his character sheet if the opportunity arises.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 24th September, 2002, 10:52 PM

Re: Getting in touch

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Tarek*  
**Gary--**

***I did in fact try a web search or two. That's how I found out that Mr. Lakofka was heavily into Diplomacy . :-)***

***Unfortunately, the web search engines that I used did not pick up any e-mail address for him, not even through the web sites that showed up.***

***Tarek***

---

A Kind Soul sent me an email giving me Len's addy, and I have just contacted him, included the URL to this page in the message. If Len is willing, he'll be dropping in:)

Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 24th September, 2002, 10:56 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Theuderic*  
**Quick question Gary: have you read any of Margeret Weis & Tracy Hickman's works and if so what did you think of them?**

---

Well, I did read about half of the first of the "Dragonlance" novel and found it not to my particular taste in fantasy, so I passed it on to my sons. One read several of their books thereafter and enjoyed them.

I enjoy either a lot of action or very interesting and different characters being developed. So, for example, Howard and Vance are favorite authors ;)

Gary

▼ Page 20 of 36   ◀◀ First   ◀ ...   10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 ...   ▶ Last   ▶▶

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## Q&amp;A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 24th September, 2002, 11:09 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by tsadkiel****Here's an interview with Charles Stross about the origins of the Gith races.******[http://www.planewalker.com/loz/mi\\_stross.shtml](http://www.planewalker.com/loz/mi_stross.shtml)***

Thanks for the URL.

Interesting that he has become a pro SF author, and too bad he has left gaming.

Mr. Stross' observations in regards to what inspired him to create the various monsters he did is pretty much the same as how I have done a number of them.

Although I know Larry Niven, I most certainly wasn't reading his material for monster ideas, then or now. As noted, the inspiration for the mind flayers came from a piece of cover art on a book in the Lovecraftian Cycle, Lumley's THE BURROWERS BENEATH. I still have that paperback in my library, too :eek:

Gary

CrusaderX

Wednesday, 25th September, 2002, 12:32 AM

Gary, I'm curious about your thoughts on the D&amp;D (or AD&amp;D) Paladin class. Many gamers see the Paladin's Lawful Good alignment restriction as an essential part of this class. Other players, however, have no problem with allowing Chaotic Good Paladins, Lawful Evil Paladins, and Paladins of any and all alignments.

Do you think that the Paladin's Lawful Good alignment restriction is an appropriate, or even an essential, element of this class? I myself am all for having "Holy Warriors" of all alignments, but I've always viewed the "Paladin" title as being uniquely bound to the service of both Law and Goodness. Maybe I'm just a traditionalist. :)

Also, from where did the class concept originate? Is it true that Poul Anderson's *Three Hearts and Three Lions* story is one of the main influences of the AD&D Paladin?

Thank you for your time, good sir! This is indeed a wonderful thread.

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 25th September, 2002, 04:01 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by CrusaderX****Gary, I'm curious about your thoughts on the D&D (or AD&D) Paladin class. Many gamers see the Paladin's Lawful Good alignment restriction as an essential part of this class. Other players, however, have no problem with allowing Chaotic Good Paladins, Lawful Evil Paladins, and Paladins of any and all alignments.******Do you think that the Paladin's Lawful Good alignment restriction is an appropriate, or even an essential, element of this class? I myself am all for having "Holy Warriors" of all alignments, but I've always viewed the "Paladin" title as being uniquely bound to the service of both Law and Goodness. Maybe I'm just a traditionalist. :)******Also, from where did the class concept originate? Is it true that Poul Anderson's *Three Hearts and Three Lions* story is one of the main influences of the AD&D Paladin?******Thank you for your time, good sir! This is indeed a wonderful thread.***

Welcome CrusaderX. Pleased to be of service...and to have a bit of fun in so doing.

As far as I am concerned, the Paladin is Lawful Good--perior. The class takes vows, swears an oath, and then follows it. The concept is drawn from some legend--Authurian--and some quasi-legend--the paladins of Charlemaine plus the code of chivalry as it was written, more honored in the breach than the keeping. As described in the game system, any characyer that was of paladin class would cease being so immediately his vows were broken.

Playing a proper paladin is often mishandled also. They are not stupid per se, only bound by oaths. For example I did allow paladins to slay dangerous prisoners if those individuals renounced Evil. In such a state of grace, killing them is actually a Good act, for they will then go on to a better life in another world instead of being sent to some dark and dismal plane to suffer for their ways after death. While a paladin will fight to the death if necessary, they are not usually bound to suicidal valor for no pirpose.

Anyway, while Poul Anderson in his excellent THREE HEARTS & THREE LIONS was treating Oiger the Dane as his protagonist, that work was not the source for the paladin class. I did borrow a good deal from the troll he had in the yarn though ;)

Cheers,  
Gary

---

ColonelHardisson

Wednesday, 25th September, 2002, 04:27 PM

Three Hearts and Three Lions *didn't* inspire the paladin? Wow. I always thought it did. Another urban legend dispelled.

On the subject of the origins of familiar tropes in the game...from what I've read, Gary, D&D was originally an outgrowth of war games, in which the party was, basically, a small unit of what one could call "commandos" that infiltrated a besieged fortress. Is that accurate? If so, then what's surprising to me is that I can't think of very many adventures ever set in such a situation. That is, while some adventures feature infiltration of fortresses - such as the "Giants" series - few ever feature a beleaguering army outside. I guess it surprises me because of how much potential such a situation has - PCs could either be from the besieging army, or they could be from the within the fortress, trying to make a sally of sorts. I'm just surprised we never saw more adventures about such a situation, given D&D's wargame origins.

---

Skarp Hedin

Wednesday, 25th September, 2002, 04:29 PM

Hi Gary,

It's very nice of you to be sitting around answering question after question here.. and when I saw this:

Quote:

---

*The FIEND FOLIO was compiled by those two, then the owners of GW, from submissions published in WHITE DWARF MAGAZINE, and brought to TSR as material for an additional book of monsters. I culled some, saw that other creatures were added, and then Lawrence Shick, the man in charge of project left in the monsters I'd said must be cut--he was leaving the company so...*

---

I just had to ask: So, then, what monsters did you designate as "must be cut" from the Fiend Folio?

---

Rel

Wednesday, 25th September, 2002, 04:37 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*  
**Although I know Larry Niven...**

---

Do me a favor and next time you see him tell him thanks for being the best hard-sci-fi writer I've ever read and that I wouldn't mind seeing another Dream Park novel when he gets a chance.

Do you also know Jimmy Buffett? If so, we can just call this thread "All Rel's Greatest Heroes" and be done with it.

---

The Sigil

Wednesday, 25th September, 2002, 05:59 PM

(Lighthearted) Would you?

I have to ask, because some of the posters on another thread were afraid to... and I figure that since I thought of it, I should bring it up...

This comes from the 1,000 Ways to Freak out your players thread... would you be willing to do this one, Colonel? It's way #1,000.

<http://enworld.cyberstreet.com/showt...=17#post387575>

--The Sigil

---

Bjorn Doneerson

Wednesday, 25th September, 2002, 08:26 PM

Hello. I don't know what to say so I guess just thanks, and I'll get on to asking you annoying questions:

You came up with all the planes, right? And the planes have their little mysteries, like what's in Chronias. Do/did you have an answer in mind for any of these and would you be willing to tell us such things?

And on a dare I ask you: Will you be my friend?

---

ScottGLXIX

Wednesday, 25th September, 2002, 09:06 PM

Greetings,

A question on some of the undead creatures. Did you originally see wights and wraiths as having corporeal forms or not? Early on wights and wraiths were very similar, the wraith was just the more powerful of the two. Over the years they've developed into very different critters with a wight having a physical form, and wraiths not.

Scott

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 25th September, 2002, 11:25 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by ColonelHardisson*

*Three Hearts and Three Lions didn't inspire the paladin? Wow. I always thought it did. Another urban legend dispelled.*

---

Well that's the way it goes;)

In truth I was using the older sources for the model of the paladin, and the 12 Paladins of Charlemagne was my main inspiration. Of course it didn't hurt that I had been told the story of Roland at about age three...

Quote:

---

*[On the subject of the origins of familiar tropes in the game...from what I've read, Gary, D&D was originally an outgrowth of war games, in which the party was, basically, a small unit of what one could call "commandos" that infiltrated a besieged fortress. Is that accurate? If so, then what's surprising to me is that I can't think of very many adventures ever set in such a situation. That is, while some adventures feature infiltration of fortresses - such as the "Giants" series - few ever feature a beleaguering army outside. I guess it surprises me because of how much potential such a situation has - PCs could either be from the besieging army, or they could be from the within the fortress, trying to make a sally of sorts. I'm just surprised we never saw more adventures about such a situation, given D&D's wargame origins.]*

---

The D&D game grew out of wargaming on the table top using the original CHAINMAIL Fantasy Supplement thereto. In that rules set there is a suggestion that when digging mines and counter mines graph paper be used, but as you note no actual D&D game module I've ever seen has taken the base, sieges, to the "commando" raid stage, either in infiltrating a fortress or for breaking out of one to wreak havoc on the besiegers lines.

As a matter of fact, though, in the HALL OF MANY PANES module I do have a scenario in which the team is sent from a besieged castle to seek help to break the encirclement.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 25th September, 2002, 11:32 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Skarp Hedin*  
**Hi Gary,**

***It's very nice of you to be sitting around answering question after question here.. and when I saw this:***

---

***I just had to ask: So, then, what monsters did you designate as "must be cut" from the Fiend Folio?***

---

Hey! I don't sit around, but when I see a notice that a reply has been posted to this thread I get back here in due course;)

As to the should-have-been-gornished entries in the FF book, well, it's 20 years, and damned if I can recall many off hand. I haven't one of those books handy, or I'll flip through and answer in detail. I surely didn't care much for the Needleman, and I do believe that the Disenchanter was another that I found rather too flimsy a creature to include. The treatment of the Kenku (sp?) also was not liked by me--katana-armed sparrows didn't do it in my view.

Alas, all that's water under the old bridge, as every entry I said should be cut was left in. Bah! :rolleyes:

Heh,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 25th September, 2002, 11:40 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Rel*

***Do me a favor and next time you see him tell him thanks for being the best hard-sci-fi writer I've ever read and that I wouldn't mind seeing another Dream Park novel when he gets a chance.***

---

***Do you also know Jimmy Buffett? If so, we can just call this thread "All Rel's Greatest Heroes" and be done with it.***

---

Last time I saw Larry was out in California in the 90s. I don't make it to many SF cons, but if I do, and the Good Mr. Niven is there, I will pass along your lauds and urging for more DREAM PARK sotires.

Can't say that I have ever met Jimmy Buffet, although I have run into Willy Nelson at the Beverly Hills Hotel way back, exchanged a few words with him. Being quartered in Lake Geneva, working all the time, sort of diminishes one's social contacts, shall we say. About the only "name" people outside gaming I see regularly are cartoonist Joe Martin and author and motivational speaker John Powers.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 25th September, 2002, 11:48 PM

Re: (Lighthearted) Would you?

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by The Sigil*

*I have to ask, because some of the posters on another thread were afraid to... and I figure that since I thought of it, I should bring it up...*

*This comes from the 1,000 Ways to Freak out your players thread... would you be willing to do this one, Colonel? It's way #1,000.*

<http://enworld.cyberstreet.com/showt...=17#post387575>

--The Sigil

---

LOL!

I have not followed that thread, '1,000 ways', because I don't want to freak them out save by what I throw at them--we don;t get to play but once a week and then only about 40 weeks a year. So much gaming to get in so little time and all that...

Of course I would do that :D The idea is hilarious--likely more so in the exposition than in actual fact, but what the hell, I love practical jokes. I've played many a one in my younger days, mainly inspired by an old book named THE PRACTICAL JOKER'S HANDBOOK. My wife talked me out of the last one I was going to pull--putting smut zines in the john at a friend's house when he was giving a dinner and play for charity... :eek:

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 25th September, 2002, 11:55 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Bjorn Doneerson*

***Hello. I don't know what to say so I guess just thanks, and I'll get on to asking you annoying questions:***

***You came up with all the planes, right? And the planes have their little mysteries, like what's in Chronias. Do/did you have an answer in mind for any of these and would you be willing to tell us such things?***

***And on a dare I ask you: Will you be my friend?***

---

To be fair, I mostly took existing material and arranged it so as to form a cosmology for PAD&D, the planes of existence. Then I made up and/or placed creatures from the game milieu into the various planes.

As for what didn't get done, all that is now moot. the property belongs to WotC, and they are the ones who will populate all of them now.

I will happily accept you as an acquaintance, and if through the course of personal interaction friendship develops, then great! Have you ever read the essay ON FRIENDSHIP? I can't recall if it was done by emerson or Thoreau. When I first read it I was stunned--blown away in current parlance. Well worth looking up and reading, that short piece of truly enlightening literature:)

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 26th September, 2002, 12:03 AM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by ScottGLXIX*

***Greetings,***

***A question on some of the undead creatures. Did you originally see wights and wraiths as having corporeal forms or not? Early on wights and wraiths were very similar, the wraith was just the more powerful of the two. Over the years they've developed into very different critters with a wight having a physical form, and wraiths not.***

***Scott***

---

Hmmm. Absolutely did have in mind that a wight was a physical being, a wraith mainly immaterial, and I thought that was clear from the get-go in original D&D. Certainly the movement rates for the two creatures reflected that, as I recall. (Heh, you can tell it's been a while since I have delved into the MM--over a year now, in fact.)

In fact, as I recall the MM illos of the two showed the wight as a clearly physical, corpse-like monster, while the wraith was shown as spectral, ghostly, no?

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Henry

Thursday, 26th September, 2002, 04:16 AM

Gary, if you would -

This question came up elsewhere on these boards, and I had never thought about it before -

in 1st Edition AD&D, was the magic item known as Daern's Instant fortress meant to expand AND contract?

or

was it meant to be a single-use item only?

---

Tewligan

Thursday, 26th September, 2002, 05:23 AM

Mr. Gygax, I humbly offer up a question to thee:

Back in "the day", Judge's Guild material was pretty much official D&D/AD&D. In addition to JG's contributions, however, I remember plenty of material by plenty of other companies that declared themselves to be suitable for use with all major fantasy RPG's, or something to that effect. A quick look inside these books made it clear that "all major fantasy RPG's" meant "AD&D." Occasionally a term would be changed ("strength" becomes "might", "hit points" becomes "wounds"), but it was obviously D&D without coming out and saying it. I was just curious if this kind of thing got TSR's legal hackles up, or was it overlooked or even encouraged? Of course, I do remember the stern warning in the DMG against using unofficial material, but was there any non-TSR/JG material at the time that caught your fancy?

---

ColonelHardisson

Thursday, 26th September, 2002, 05:44 AM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***Have you ever read the essay ON FRIENDSHIP? I can't recall if it was done by emerson or Thoreau. When I first read it I was stunned-- blown away in current parlayance. Well worth looking up and reading, that short piece of truly enlightening literature:)***

***Cheerio,  
Gary***

Are you thinking of the one by Cicero?

<http://www.bartleby.com/9/1/>

---

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 26th September, 2002, 02:43 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Henry  
Gary, if you would -*

***This question came up elsewhere on these boards, and I had never thought about it before -***

***in 1st Edition AD&D, was the magic item known as Daern's Instant fortress meant to expand AND contract?***

***or***

***was it meant to be a single-use item only?***

What's the matter with you, Henry?!! I know what I had in mind, and just because I neglected to put down that one small detail, there is confusion! USe your psionic power of mind reading for goodness dake.

Heh, and sorry. The item, Daern's Instant Fortress, was meant as a multi-use object, and upon command it would contract after being activated.

The devil is in the details, and it seems that I oft shun the devil, eh? :eek:

Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 26th September, 2002, 02:52 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Tewligan*

***Mr. Gygax, I humbly offer up a question to thee:***

***Back in "the day", Judge's Guild material was pretty much official D&D/AD&D. In addition to JG's contributions, however, I remember plenty of material by plenty of other companies that declared themselves to be suitable for use with all major fantasy RPG's, or something to that effect. A quick look inside these books made it clear that "all major fantasy RPG's" meant "AD&D." Occasionally a term would be changed ("strength" becomes "might", "hit points" becomes "wounds"), but it was obviously D&D without coming out and saying it. I was just curious if this kind of thing got TSR's legal hackles up, or was it overlooked or even encouraged? Of course, I do remember the stern warning in the DMG against using unofficial material, but was there any non-TSR/JG material at the time that caught your fancy?***

As protective of its IP rights as TSR was, there was never any thought of attempting to somehow patent the RPG system. As long as the marks, D&D and AD&D were not used, or likenesses of creatures unique to TSR's games weren't used, "generic" material was ignored--neither encouraged nor discouraged.

Judge's Guild requested and received a license to use the marks belonging to TSR on its products. I was all for that, and wanted to license Mayfair's "Role Aids" line later on, but the BLumes would not agree.

As for me using any generic material, no. I was too busy creating new work of my own, checking that done in house, or going over tournament module material. never enough hours in a day to get in half what I would have liked to.



Cheers,  
Gary

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## Q&amp;A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Show 20 post(s) from this thread on one page

▼ Page 22 of 36 ◀◀ First ◀ ... 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 ... ▶ Last ▶▶

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 26th September, 2002, 03:02 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by ColonelHardisson***Are you thinking of the one by Cicero?**<http://www.bartleby.com/9/1/>

Hi Colonel!

Noppers. I have stashed somewhere around here around 40 or so of the "Little Leather Library" books, a small portion of the library left to me by my grandfather. One of those small tomes contains the essay, ON FRIENDSHIP, and I am sure it is either Emerson or Thoreau who authored it. I haven't read it in a decade, so I should locate the place I have cached those small volumes and re-read it and several others soo.

Cheers,  
Gary

Bjorn Doneerson

Thursday, 26th September, 2002, 08:54 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh***To be fair, I mostly took existing material and arranged it so as to form a cosmology for PAD&D, the planes of existence. Then I made up and/or placed creatures from the game milieu into the various planes.**

Hmm. What were some of these sources?

Quote:

**As for what didn't get done, all that is now moot. the property belongs to WotC, and they are the ones who will populate all of them now.**

But, did you personally hae anything in mind for those things?

Quote:

**I will happily accept you as an acquaintance, and if thought the course of personal interaction friendship develops, then great! Have you ever read the essay ON FRIENDSHIP? I can't recall if it was done by emerson or Thoreau. When I first read it I was stunned--blown away in current parlayance. Well worth looking up and reading, that short piece of truly enlightening literature:)**

**Cheerio,**  
**Gary**

I'll have to look into that. Thank you for your time.

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 26th September, 2002, 09:51 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Bjorn Doneerson***Hmm. What were some of these sources?****But, did you personally hae anything in mind for those things?****I'll have to look into that. Thank you for your time.**

In regards your first query, I used the alchemical for the elemental planes, the old concept of the elheral plane, ideas drawn from the Spiritualist writers of the 19th century, along with mythology. For example, Ancient Egyptian religious belief had an upper realm, Pet, and a lower one, the Duat or Tuat, something that combined areas of a material paradise, uncertain realms, and hellish places. Where one's soul ended up depended

on how the deceased lived life,

As to the second question, sure I had many things in mind--and that's where they'll stay ;)

The essay is one that is remarkable, for it sheds light on what a very important and rare thing friendship is, what it demands of one. Do read it.

Cheerio,  
Gary

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MerricB

Friday, 27th September, 2002, 05:39 AM

G'day, Gary!

More questions! :D

In OAD&D, rangers gain a damage bonus vs. "giant-class" creatures. What exactly did "giant-class" mean? Or is it just the list of monsters that the ranger did additional damage to, as listed in the PH and expanded in UA?

Do you ever use adventure modules created by other people, or are your games completely the result of your own imagination (as modified by your players, of course! ;))

Cheers!

---

Ahzad

Friday, 27th September, 2002, 06:11 AM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**Hi Colonel!**

***Noppers. I have stashed somewhere around here around 40 or so of the "Little Leather Library" books, a small portion of the library left to me by my grandfather. One of those small tomes contains the essay, ON FRIENDSHIP, and I am sure it is either Emerson or Thoreau who authored it. I haven't read it in a decade, so I should locate the place I have cached those small volumes and re-read it and several others soo.***

***Cheers,  
Gary***

---

Hi Gary, no real questions to ask of you, as the others in the thread have done a fine job at bringing up most of the ones I would thought to ask. I'd just like to say thanks for all the great times I've had over the years with this little game of yours, now I'm passing it along to my own children and their friends and having a blast reliving the game for first time through their eyes. :)

As for the essay it is by Emerson and it can be found here  
<http://www.rwe.org/works/Essays-1st...Friendship.htm>

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Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 27th September, 2002, 04:27 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by MerricB  
G'day, Gary!*

***More questions! :D***

***In OAD&D, rangers gain a damage bonus vs. "giant-class" creatures. What exactly did "giant-class" mean? Or is it just the list of monsters that the ranger did additional damage to, as listed in the PH and expanded in UA?***

***Do you ever use adventure modules created by other people, or are your games completely the result of your own imagination (as modified by your players, of course! ;))***

***Cheers!***

---

G'Day Mate...

...and at this time of year I wish I were Down Under where spring is in progress rather than being here where autumn is all too soon introducing winter's gloom:(

You have it. The list in the PHB, expanded in UA, is that of the "Giant Class" against which rangers were so effective. It seemed a good corollary to clerics and undead. (I am generous to a fault with PCs, of course...)

On many occasions I have my players adventure in other authors' modules--in the past using AD&D, and even currently using the LA game system. This is a good change of pace for all concerned, I think, and it allows me, as the GM, to have a bit of R&R from the creative frontline.

The same is true for getting onto the other side of the screen, if you will, playing a character. It is an excellent thing from my standpoint, getting to play, work against the GM's plottings, and in all stimulating--entertaining and creatively invigorating.

Now if only I could get someone here to run some LA game sessions for me, because I need to get a better player's perspective there :D

Cheerio,  
Gary

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Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 27th September, 2002, 04:33 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Ahzad*

***Hi Gary, no real questions to ask of you, as the others in the thread have done a fine job at bringing up most of the ones I would thought to ask. I'd just like to say thanks for all the great times I've had over the years with this little game of yours, now I'm passing it along to my own children and their friends and having a blast reliving the game for first time through their eyes. :)***

***As for the essay it is by Emerson and it can be found here***  
***<http://www.rwe.org/works/Essays-1st....Friendship.htm>***

That's appreciated, Terry:)

I've noted over the past few years at GenCon not only pre-gamers being introduced to me by their parents but a fair number of actual RPGers of tender years, some teens in fact, thus brought there as 2nd generation. It would make me feel really ancient, save for the fact that I have sons of my own playing, and a couple of 3rd generation grandchildren that play, so it seems natural to me ;)

Thanks very much for the URL on the Emerson essay too :eek:

Cheers,  
Gary

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Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 28th September, 2002, 12:37 AM

Bunping this for two reasons:

1) Tomorrow I'll be gone all day at a mini-con.

2) Sunday I'll clear up email and answer any last queries hereon. I think this thread has pretty well run it's course. but if someone has some burning question they'd like to get in this weekend, I'm game:)

Cheerio,  
Gary

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Taren Nighteyes

Saturday, 28th September, 2002, 04:25 AM

Thanks for everything!

Gary,

I've been playing D&D since I was 12 - so over 14 years now. I have wonderful memories that will be retold countless times for years - generations - to come. I wait for my son, who is 5, and my daughter, who is 2 1/2, to be old enough to teach and nurture a love for fantasy and games. (My wife plays, and thinks its a blast!)

I have an original small wood grain box (2nd printing), with the 3 books in very good condition, and then supplements I through IV in the same condition. I need to make it to GenCon or some other event and get you to sign them!

(I've got issues 1-7 of the little Dungeoneer "magazine" that was put out for a while, but that isn't TSR stuff - and other old non-TSR stuff - I have been collecting :D )

Thank you for answering all of these questions. I have been reading the thread every day, eager to discover something "new" and interesting.

Taren Nighteyes

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MerricB

Saturday, 28th September, 2002, 01:32 PM

G'day Gary!

Thanks muchly for answering our questions over the past days! (weeks? months? years!) ;)

We're having some very nice Spring days down here - a pity you can't experience them!

I hope there's someone game enough to run you through some LA sessions. I seem to remember playing a character myself some five years ago... ah, the Curse of the DM! :)

Before you go, a last request/suggestion (though not for answering on this thread!): please give a thought for including in your On A Soapbox column some details from play in the original Temple of Elemental Evil, the "Wonderland" of CG, and the Isle of the Ape.

Especially the latter - you've dropped some nice hints in the published module of the terrible time your players had of it! :D

Best wishes,  
Merric

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Breakdaddy

Sunday, 29th September, 2002, 12:52 AM

Thanks Gary! Hope that even after this thread is gone that you drop in and hang out with us, its been a real pleasure!

:D

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Geoffrey

Sunday, 29th September, 2002, 04:56 AM

Gary, thank you for making this the best RPG thread I've ever seen.

Best of luck with all of the following:

Lejendary Adventure--May its players double every three months!

Castle GreyHack for HackMaster--We've been eagerly awaiting this for a long time. A pox on the shade of T\$R!

Your various and sundry d20 products--May they sell a million copies!

All your other endeavors--May they be pleasing and profitable!

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johnsemlak

Sunday, 29th September, 2002, 12:51 PM

A few last questions

Gary,

You said you might answer a few last final questions. Here we go.

1. Sorry, but this very small thing has nagged me for years...

In Appendix N (inspirational reading) of the 1e DMG, you write:

"The most immediate influences upon AD&D were probably de Camp & Pratt, REH [Howard], Fritz Leiber, Jack Vance, HPL [Lovecraft], and A. Merritt."

In listing the primary authors that influenced the AD&D game, you left out J.R.R. Tolkien (you put him in a much larger list of sources of fantasy but did not include him among the 'most immediate influences'). As many people (erroneously) consider D&D to be a rather close copy of Tolkien's world, leaving out Tolkien seems conspicuous.

Is there any particular reason you didn't single out Tolkien as one of the major influences on AD&D?

2. Was there any particular inspiration for the lich?

3. I'm sure the answer to this is available elsewhere, but could you say how you came up with the name Dungeons and Dragons? (if it was covered earlier in the thread, sorry).

4. You recently published a d20 supplement that included a mini dictionary of Thief's Cant, based on the historical language of, well, thieves. Do you often make use of historical languages in designing adventures or material (Latin, Greek, old English, Near Eastern Lanugages, etc). Did you ever study any 'dead' languages?

It's been said already by me and others, but thanks again for answering so many questions.

Happy Adventuring!

John Semlak

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belegost

Sunday, 29th September, 2002, 01:52 PM

Gary,

Thanks for all the time you've spent on this thread and for creating a game that I've been enjoying for 22+ years. It is wonderful that the creator still has passion for RPGs after all these years. Like you've said you are a gamer.

My son (9) has discovered D&D and I've been enjoying his fresh take on the game. It is amazing that the younger kids can occassionally have brilliant sessions that would impress my older, more experienced group of gamers. They also don't notice or mind when I slip a little education in the games (mapping/scale, economics, governments, communities, creative writing, etc.). RPGs are a tremendous learning tool and great fun.

Do you have any memorable incident when your children (still young) surprised you with their gaming prowess?

My older players are fully entrenched in D&D. However I've wanted to give LA a go. How well does the game translate to younger players? I believe that you stated that it is rules lite which sounds great. I don't expect my younger players to know all the rules (in fact, the lack of knowledge of every minute detail appears to help in their gaming). I'm currently perusing the newsgroups at LejendaryAdventures.com to try and educating myself on the game.

Ironically, I think playing LA would also help with several children whose parents do not want them to play D&D as they still believe the media reports of the 80s and are convinced that D&D will lead to the occult/suicide/etc. I respect their decision as concerned parents but wish they would have taken the time to join us for a session or two as I've suggested. I've mentioned Lejendary Adventures to them and they seemed much more open. How ironic as both games have the same founding father!

Thanks again.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 29th September, 2002, 03:55 PM

Re: Thanks for everything!

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Quote:

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*Originally posted by Taren Nighteyes*  
**Gary,**

*I've been playing D&D since I was 12 - so over 14 years now. I have wonderful memories that will be retold countless times for years - generations - to come. I wait for my son, who is 5, and my daughter, who is 2 1/2, to be old enough to teach and nurture a love for fantasy and games. (My wife plays, and thinks its a blast!)*

*I have an original small wood grain box (2nd printing), with the 3 books in very good condition, and then supplements I through IV in the same condition. I need to make it to GenCon or some other event and get you to sign them!*

*Thank you for answering all of these questions. I have been reading the thread every day, eager to discover something "new" and interesting.*

**Taren Nighteyes**

---

Welcome! As all of my six children have played, and the three boys (well two men and one teenager) still do, I thoroguhly approve of your ambition. It is really great to see whole families enjoying a convention, playing together.

Wish I still had my original D&D. long gone now:(

Cheers,  
Gary

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Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 29th September, 2002, 04:06 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by MerricB*  
**G'day Gary!**

*Before you go, a last request/suggestion (though not for answering on this thread!): please give a thought for including in your On A Soapbox column some details from play in the original Temple of Elemental Evil, the "Wonderland" of CG, and the Isle of the Ape.*

*Especially the latter - you've dropped some nice hints in the published module of the terrible time your players had of it! :D*

**Best wishes,**  
**Merric**

---

Hi Amigo!

The main story of unusual sort in re the ToEE is likely too well known to treat again--that of Robilar's romp therein with his orc hero, Quij left waiting outside.

Terik had some hilarious run-ins in THE LAND BEYOND THE MAGIC MIRROR with the Walrus and Carpenter, but they were more of the "you had to be there" sort.

Terik was also the main actor in the various lotA adventures, as he took great exception to the chief's and witch doctor's initial treatment of him. A series of attacks followed, with retreats coming in due course, and then return visits with comrades to take revenge. On;y after finally roughly handling the native population sis the crew go into the island's interior. One PC, and I won't say which, met Oonga, got grabbed, wrenched, bittem, thrown down, and then drop-kicked off the ledge of the cave. A wish was expended to save him. That ended all interest in further adventuring there :(

Cheers,  
Gary

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Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 29th September, 2002, 04:10 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Breakdaddy*  
**Thanks Gary! Hope that even after this thread is gone that you drop in and hang out with us, its been a real pleasure!**

**:D**

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It has been a proverbial slice, Breakdaddy:D

I am indeed postiing on a couple of other threads, and it is mainly when I have to put my creative nose to the writing grindstone that board posting goes by the boards...heh.

Fact is I have been goofing off for a bit, and I need to get to some serious writing and work again soon.

Cheerio,  
Gary

Quote:

*Originally posted by Geoffrey*  
**Gary, thank you for making this the best RPG thread I've ever seen.**

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**Your various and sundry d20 products--May they sell a million copies!**

**All your other endeavors--May they be pleasing and profitable!**

Geoffrey, you have the laundry list down pretty well. From your lips to God's ear. Of course, if all that happens, I will "retire" in short order and start playing more games :D Heck, I could likely run three different RPG campaign sessions a week then, and finding players would be the main problem...

Heh,  
Gary

Re: A few last questions

Quote:

*Originally posted by johnsemlak*  
**Gary,**

**You said you might answer a few last final questions. Here we go.**

**1. Sorry, but this very small thing has nagged me for years...**

**In Appendix N (inspirational reading) of the 1e DMG, you write:**

**"The most immediate influences upon AD&D were probably de Camp & Pratt, REH [Howard], Fritz Leiber, Jack Vance, HPL [Lovecraft], and A. Merritt."**

**In listing the primary authors that influenced the AD&D game, you left out J.R.R. Tolkien (you put him in a much larger list of sources of fantasy but did not include him among the 'most immediate influences'). As many people (erroneously) consider D&D to be a rather close copy of Tolkien's world, leaving out Tolkien seems conspicuous.**

**Is there any particular reason you didn't single out Tolkien as one of the major influences on AD&D?**

Happy to be of service.

I omitted JRRT's work as a primary one because it didn't inspire me in regards to gaming, to create the material in A/D&D that made it what it is at its core. While I enjoyed THE HOBBIT, the trilogy was not an exciting read for me.

The listed authors and works were what moved me to want to design a game that allowed participants to have exciting fantasy adventures. The "influences" from JRRT's work that I included in the game were mainly there to interest others in playing it, not what caused me to want to create it ;)

Quote:

**2. Was there any particular inspiration for the lich?**

Actually, no. The lich just seemed a natural for the upper ranks of the undead in the game, so I created the various features of that monster for the system, and used only broad general knowledge to do so.

Quote:

**3. I'm sure the answer to this is available elsewhere, but could you say how you came up with the name Dungeons and Dragons? (if it was covered earlier in the thread, sorry).**

There is some false information put out on this subject from T\$R after I split. When I wrote the initial and second drafts of the D&D game ms. I had it's title as "The Fantasy Game." This was for two reasons: One, I hadn't settled on a name yet. Two, when I did choose a name, I didn't want it known until a product was out. During this period I made up a two-column list of names. All in column one could stand alone or go with one in the second column to form a longer title. I read the lists to my regular players, and my family, asking what they thought best. Of course the list had both "Dungeons" and "Dragons" on it. Those two in combination were the favorites, and when my (then) little daughter Cindy clapped her hands and said she really liked that name, I agreed. It was my favorite too--after all, I had formed the Castle & Crusade Society as a part of the International Federation of Wargaming about three years before that.

Quote:

**4. You recently published a d20 supplement that included a mini dictionary of Thief's Cant, based on the historical language of, well, thieves. Do you often make use of historical languages in designing adventures or material (Latin, Greek, old English, Near Eastern Lanugages, etc). Did you ever study any 'dead' languages?**

---

Right, I have been fascinated by "thieves' cant" for a long time, so I did indeed develop that for use in RPGs where the GM wants to add criminal underclass action to the campaign--or for authors who want to have characters speak in cant now and then. However, that exercise was demanding on me as the GM, because my players took to it as ducks to water, and then I had to remember all the bloody stuff!

As for using/studying other languages, no. I have more than enough to worry about managing English in writing and gaming :rolleyes:

Cheerio,  
Gary

Happy Adventuring!

John Semlak [/B]/[/QUOTE]

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Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 29th September, 2002, 04:58 PM

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Quote:

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*Originally posted by belegost  
Gary,*

***Thanks for all the time you've spent on this thread and for creating a game that I've been enjoying for 22+ years. It is wonderful that the creator still has passion for RPGs after all these years. Like you've said you are a gamer.***

---

Whew! Glad someone did notice that. My parents and grandparents had to suffer with that since I was about five years old. The only damper I ever recall was my grandfather's whupping my ass at chess (he could play seven boards at once) and then correcting an early move I made, so we could play again from that point and he could whup my ass again later on.. :D

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Quote:

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***My son (9) has discovered D&D and I've been enjoying his fresh take on the game. It is amazing that the younger kids can occasionally have brilliant sessions that would impress my older, more experienced group of gamers. They also don't notice or mind when I slip a little education in the games (mapping/scale, economics, governments, communities, creative writing, etc.). RPGs are a tremendous learning tool and great fun.***

***Do you have any memorable incident when your children (still young) surprised you with their gaming prowess?***

---

Oh, yes. My two oldest children were initial play-testers in 1972-3. As they had few pre-conceptions, they often amazed and confounded me. More recently, the group of mainly older players has ignored suggestions from my youngest son, and I have had to bite my tongue, because he had struck the nail on the head.

Of course young players often have pretty bad ideas too. The great part is to watch them learn and develop, see the playing skill increase over time.

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Quote:

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***My older players are fully entrenched in D&D. However I've wanted to give LA a go. How well does the game translate to younger players? I believe that you stated that it is rules lite which sounds great. I don't expect my younger players to know all the rules (in fact, the lack of knowledge of every minute detail appears to help in their gaming). I'm currently perusing the newsgroups at LejendaryAdventures.com to try and educating myself on the game.***

---

Actually, I believe that the LA game is really fun for any age gamer who enjoys roleplay and doesn't like rules getting in the way of adventuring. There is a good deal of intuitiveness in playing an LA game Avatar, and children usually do quite well with the system. It has free stats, and about the most difficult thing for them to manage is the magic system. Keeping track of the points there is a bit hard for youngsters.

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Quote:

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***Ironically, I think playing LA would also help with several children whose parents do not want them to play D&D as they still believe the media reports of the 80s and are convinced that D&D will lead to the occult/suicide/etc. I respect their decision as concerned parents but wish they would have taken the time to join us for a session or two as I've suggested. I've mentioned Lejendary Adventures to them and they seemed much more open. How ironic as both games have the same founding father!***

***Thanks again.***

---

While I am most happy to have new participants pick up the LA game as their primary RPG, or as a change of pace "second system", I most certainly hate to see that happen for the reason you note: (The ignorant attacks and prejudice against D&D are very unpalatable to me, and not mainly because I wrote so much of the game, but because those charges are so awfully wrong!

Cheerio,  
Gary



All times are GMT +1. The time now is 03:13 PM.

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## belegost

Sunday, 29th September, 2002, 09:03 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***While I am most happy to have new participants pick up the LA game as their primary RPG, or as a change of pace "second system", I most certainly hate to see that happen for the reason you note: (The ignorant attacks and prejudice against D&D are very unpalatable to me, and not mainly because I wrote so much of the game, but because those charges are so awfully wrong!)***

I should be clear and state that this is a side effect of looking at LA certainly not my primary reason. I'm up for a change of pace and rules light sounds great. As for tracking of points, we have a few adult players (dads of other players) that can help out as needed. Thanks for the info.

As for the ignorance in the attacks on D&D, they've frustrated (disgusted) me for years as well. I spent long hours debating with my parents in the early '80s after I had my AD&D books confiscated. Thankfully, my parents sat down and took the time to look things over and discuss them with me before rendering a final verdict (and returning my books).

As for those that think Video Games have replaced D&D in the parental consciousness, I have had to sit down and explain away the myths to nearly EVERY parent that isn't a gamer. I am happy to report that most are very open minded as long as you take the time to discuss the matter and offer to have them a chance to sit in on the game (wish more would accept).

No doubt the charges are false, the educational benefits of playing an RPG (as long as it doesn't become an obsession) are significant. My initial response to such irrational fear/hatred toward the game is to lash back, but then I remember that as a gamer it is in my best interest to represent the hobby responsibly so we can continue to grow or at least maintain our numbers. Friendly communication and sharing breaks down many of the barriers and is helping me to grow my small group.

Thanks again Gary. I don't want to cut into your writing time but felt a response was in order. Looking forward to future releases. Time to get back to the TV and see if the Packers can pull this one out in the 4th.

Michael

## Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 30th September, 2002, 12:58 AM

Quote:

*Originally posted by belegost*

***As for those that think Video Games have replaced D&D in the parental consciousness, I have had to sit down and explain away the myths to nearly EVERY parent that isn't a gamer. I am happy to report that most are very open minded as long as you take the time to discuss the matter and offer to have them a chance to sit in on the game (wish more would accept).***

*Michael*

Hi Michael!

To get to the gist of things, happy to hear that rules-lite sounds good to you, and the younger gamers should take to the system easily. What I must do here, though, is to give you a tip of the old hat for the above. Great to hear that articulate explanation clears up confusion and dispels ignorance:)

Cheers!  
Gary

## Caedrel

Monday, 30th September, 2002, 03:28 AM

Thanks from me too

Hello Gary,

I too just wanted to say "Thank you" for hanging around, posting your thoughts, and most of all for being both honest and yet restrained in pretty much everything except your enthusiasm and passion for gaming.

I saw this thread late in the piece (it was up to page 8, I think) but spent 2 hours reading through everything on Saturday morning. While I think LA is probably a bit too rules light for my taste, it's been wonderful to see everyone - including yourself - acknowledge it as just that, a matter of taste. It's so easy to belittle things (and people) we don't like that I applaud you for your maturity in not doing so.

Thanks for the fascinating and enlightening window you've given me into an activity I am having a blast with, and all the best with your latest

project(s)...

Cheers!

---

Paul\_Klein

Monday, 30th September, 2002, 10:45 AM

Hey Gary! I live about 20 minutes south of you (Woodstock, Illinois), but I travel to Lake Geneva probably twice a month with my girlfriend to walk on the beach... one question tho: I don't know if you go out much on Friday or Saturday evenings... but Lake Geneva seems to attract the loudest most annoying teenage joyriders in the midwest! I'm scared just to DRIVE in that town on the weekends. HOW do you put up with it?

HAHA once time my girlfriend and I were sitting on a bench in downtown LG one Friday evening watching all the cars drive by. I swear, in 30 minutes, we saw 4 or 5 different guys in souped-up cars drive up that same street 10 times. Either they're desperately trying to impress girls, or they need a HOBBY! Like...say... oh nevermind ;)

Oh wait... I actually do have a game-related question...

What happened to the Game Guild? I know that it moved several months back, but it moved to a smaller building that's \*completely\* hidden from view by some smoke-shop. Why the move?

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 30th September, 2002, 03:11 PM

Re: Thanks from me too

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Caedrel*  
**Hello Gary,**

***I too just wanted to say "Thank you" ...***

***...It's so easy to belittle things (and people) we don't like that I applaud you for your maturity in not doing so.***

...

***Cheers!***

---

My pleasure, and welcome:)

One thing is easy. I am "mature," shall we say, even though I haven't gtown up :eek: By that I mean experience has taught me that everyone has their own gaming preferences, and it is not a matter of "good" or "bad" in all, save in light of one's own preferences. In short, saying you like something better than someone else does doesn't make you right or them wrong. Also, disputs and invective don't gey my undies in a bunch. Some folks just enjoy being nasty for one reason or another--mainly a sort of "look at me" syndrom I have come to believe. Likely most of those folks are really okay, just need some maturity and some camaraderie.

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 30th September, 2002, 03:29 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Paul\_Klein*

***Hey Gary! I live about 20 minutes south of you (Woodstock, Illinois), but I travel to Lake Geneva probably twice a month with my girlfriend to walk on the beach... one question tho: I don't know if you go out much on Friday or Saturday evenings... but Lake Geneva seems to attract the loudest most annoying teenage joyriders in the midwest! I'm scared just to DRIVE in that town on the weekends. HOW do you put up with it?***

***HAHA once time my girlfriend and I were sitting on a bench in downtown LG one Friday evening watching all the cars drive by. I swear, in 30 minutes, we saw 4 or 5 different guys in souped-up cars drive up that same street 10 times. Either they're desperately trying to impress girls, or they need a HOBBY! Like...say... oh nevermind ;)***

---

Sure, and I know Woodstock p[retty well. It has sure gotten big over the years since first we used to drive down there as teenage kids looking for something to do. That brings me to the LG crowd.

As a resort town Lake Geneva changed from family vacation spot to young-folks hot-spot in the 1950s. As a teenager we would be out every weekend looking for girls. Being locals we knew which weekends were best, as they would alternate. One weekend a lot of guys would be in town, and we'd quit patrolling early then. Next weekend, when the girls had spread the word that there were five guys for every one of them, and vice versa, we'd sure be out and about ;)

Now that I'm well past that stage, it's easy to just stay home on weekends--go to someone else's house, ot hit a place out of town where the kids don't go.

BTW, my house is a block and a half from the library pary, two from the beach. Most of the traffic is centered around the MAin & Broad area and the beach, of course, so it's pretty quiet here even on busy weekends.

And as a teenager I was usually in one of those cars endlessly circling. Finally we caught on to the fact that walking around was the way to meet girls. Then we parked the car and did just that... In fall-spring we did indeed pursue something other than girls--games!

Quote:

---

*Oh wait... I actually do have a game-related question...*

*What happened to the Game Guild? I know that it moved several months back, but it moved to a smaller building that's "completely" hidden from view by some smoke-shop. Why the move?*

---

Don Perrin and Margaret Weis sold the operation, and now Dennis Harsh (a former member of my gaming group and a really great guy) manages the Game Guild. They moved to the second floor of that big mall-type building on the corner of Main and Mill street because of cost. Maintaining it in its second location--the two places on Broad and Dodge Streets--wasn't possible unless they bought them from Don & Margaret.

I agree with you that the new place is like a "blind ale house"--as if purposefully hidden to keep the uninitiated away. That's not by design. They need signage--neon and large. I don't think that they'll get it though:(

I'd hang out there, play games and all, but as with most places these days, it's "no smoking." About half of my group smokes, myself included, so we prefer to be in less restrictive surroundings...and we can tip a brew here too :eek:

Cheerio,  
Gary

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Grigori

Thursday, 3rd October, 2002, 11:18 PM

Hey, Gary! An off the wall question--- What, if any was the relationship between dreggals and barghests in Gehenna? Barghests seem more powerful, but dreggals had the bigger role in the Gord novels... Also, did you ever develop creatures native to the Plane of Arcadia--seems that this plane in particular was neglected. Thanks!

---

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 3rd October, 2002, 11:42 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Grigori*

***Hey, Gary! An off the wall question--- What, if any was the relationship between dreggals and barghests in Gehenna? Barghests seem more powerful, but dreggals had the bigger role in the Gord novels... Also, did you ever develop creatures native to the Plane of Arcadia--seems that this plane in particular was neglected. Thanks!***

---

Here I am again after thinking I had slipped off this hook...

In developing some nasty inhabitants for Gehenna, I figured that the dreggals would be the most populous, not the most powerful. Thus you see lots of them in action--the proverbial cannon fodder for the greater creatures behind them. They carry out the tasks assigned, are expendable.

I never did get around to creating a population for Arcadia, as that plane was not one that I envisioned as playing much of a role in the great struggle. Before that none of my players ever got sent to that place, so being a typically busy and harried DM, I didn't spend time working on something that seemed unlikely to be a factor in the campaign. Eventually I would have gotten around to it, mainly to toss something really different into the mix, but...

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Helspar

Sunday, 13th October, 2002, 11:11 PM

This has probably already been asked before, but what inspired D&D to transition from a game apparently played among a group of friends to published material?

We all read about the formative sessions of Chainmail and D&D, does copies of the original rules still exist somewhere in that fabled spiral notebook?

And why was the use of a die 20 elected for use over say a die six or percentile system?

---

grodog

Monday, 14th October, 2002, 03:23 AM

briefcase tourney/Good King Despot's replacement?

Gary,

Back in the day, you commented that you used to carry a copy of The Abduction of Good King Despot for use at tourneys and cons as a pick-up game. Once you published that adventure, what have you carried around since?

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 14th October, 2002, 05:31 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Helspar*

***This has probably already been asked before, but what inspired D&D to transition from a game apparently played among a group of friends to published material?***

***We all read about the formative sessions of Chainmail and D&D, does copies of the original rules still exist somewhere in that fabled spiral notebook?***

Here I am again!

In 1970 I left my previous field of work to become a professional writer and game designer, so it was with purpose that the D&D game was developed. The reason I wanted to become a "pro" was so that I could share what I thought were great game products with my fellows. This I did with respect to military miniatures rules, board wargames, and then the first RPG game sold.

Sadly, I have lost the original ms. copies for what became the D&D game, the initial c. 50 pp. (1972) one and the later 150 pp. (1973) one. I understand that at least one copy of one of them exists, but where I can't say. My original copy of the second draft went to the printers, and from it came the original D&D game's three booklets. I never recovered the ms. from the printer:(

As to the d20 for use in combat, we had used a 5% incremental system for hit determination in an earlier work, the TRACTICS rules. thus it was natural for me to utilize the same easy system for the D&D game even as I used all the other dice for other aspects of the game.

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 14th October, 2002, 05:37 PM

Re: briefcase tourney/Good King Despot's replacement?

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by grodog*  
**Gary,**

***Back in the day, you commented that you used to carry a copy of The Abduction of Good King Despot for use at tourneys and cons as a pick-up game. Once you published that adventure, what have you carried around since?***

---

Heh, and right...

After 'DESPOT' was published I did have to find another fall-back. owever, as I was then working on the DANGEROUS JOURNEYS game system, I didn't need one for a FRPG. the initial genre for the DJ system was horror, and I had some adventure notes for that on hand when I went out and about. Later on I was not making any cons where I needed pick-up material--too busy working on the fantasy material for the DJ/Mythus game. More recently I have taken to carrying around both some old D&D levels from my Greyhawk Castle campaign and an introductory adventure I did up for the LEJENDARY ADVENTURE game. As I don't attend many cons because I am so busy writing, that's plenty ;)  
Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Upper\_Krust

Monday, 14th October, 2002, 05:40 PM

Hi Gary! :)

One question I have been puzzling over for years.

In Monster Manual 2 (1st Ed AD&D); pg 39 under the entry for Graz'zt you have the following line:

"...He was in fact waging a winning battle against the troglodyte, harpy and bar-Igura."

Who are 'THE' troglodyte; harpy and bar-Igura?

The sentence implies either unique entities or the entirety of the race/sub-race.

Can you shed any light on the matter?

---

Redleg06

Monday, 14th October, 2002, 05:44 PM

Gary,

Someone may have asked this before, but I cannot resist throwing the hand-grenade into the china shop.

Drow. Was the original intent to create a race of evil elves? Or just to create a race of sub-terrainian elves with dark skin and kewl abilities? (And those nifty little hand-crossbows!)

---

Dinkeldog

Monday, 14th October, 2002, 06:28 PM

As an addendum to Redleg's question, was the intent that all drow would be evil and no player could ever be one?

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 14th October, 2002, 06:29 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Upper\_Krust*  
**Hi Gary! :)**

***One question I have been puzzling over for years.***

*In Monster Manual 2 (1st Ed AD&D); pg 39 under the entry for Graz'zt you have the following line:*

*"...He was in fact waging a winning battle against the troglodyte, harpy and bar-Igura."*

*Who are 'THE' troglodyte; harpy and bar-Igura?*

*The sentence implies either unique entities or the entirety of the race/sub-race.*

*Can you shed any light on the matter?*

---

Eeep! And here I was thinking that this thread was surely buried in the oblivion of the many old ones piled up here...

When I wrote the text in question in regards the demon Graz'zt, I was envisaging various warfare that must be constantly raging between the leaders of the Evil factions with their respective minions as the cannon fodder. Thus wording was meant to infer that one or more other potent Evil entities leading trogs, harpies, and bar-legura in opposition to Graz'zt.

That clear it up for you, Upper\_Krust?

Ciao,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 14th October, 2002, 06:37 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Redleg06*  
**Gary,**

*Someone may have asked this before, but I cannot resist throwing the hand-grenade into the china shop.*

---

Kla-BLAM!

Okay, as the smoke and fragments clear, I step forth unharmed:D

Quote:

---

*Drow. Was the original intent to create a race of evil elves? Or just to create a race of sub-terranean elves with dark skin and kewl abilities? (And those nifty little hand-crossbows!) [/B]*

---

Both, as a matter of fact. I wanted to have a new, unique, and interesting race of demi-humans that dwelled in and command much of the vast underworld of Oerth. They were, as stated, of Evil bent as a race, so the clear intent was to have fell opponents for non-Evil PC. That all drow were not of Evil I also noted in the "Gord the Rogue" tales, for Leda, a drow, was certainly not of malign sort.

The drow abilities were given to them to highlight their unique nature and potency.

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 14th October, 2002, 06:40 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Dinkeldog*  
**As an addendum to Redleg's question, was the intent that all drow would be evil and no player could ever be one?**

---

Noppers. As noted in my reply to Redleg's post, I didn't think all drow had to be evil--only maybe 99% It then follows that some player might have a drow character, Evil or not, as the DM allowed ;)

Cheers,  
Gary

---

ZimbrantSouldrinker

Tuesday, 15th October, 2002, 01:53 AM

Hey Gary,

It's little Dan from Wiscosin GenCon (83 I think)

I got one question, why did ya let Cook screw up the game soo badly?

Was is the cocaine, or did ya just not give a rat's ass?

Just wanna know....

(if you guys got the balls to ask him, I (as well as all other 1st ed. players and DMs) genuinely would really like to know.

It's all about respect and if you've got the boys to earn it

Quote:

*Originally posted by ZimbrantSoulrinker*  
**Hey Gary,**

***It's little Dan from Wiscosin GenCon (83 I think)***

***I got one question, why did ya let Cook screw up the game soo badly?***

***Was is the cocaine, or did ya just not give a rat's ass?***

Well, I can understand your calling yourself "little," because from the above it is evident that you are a small person in many ways. I won't dignify your question beyond stating the obvious: When Zeb Cook rewrote AD&D, I was no longer associated with TSR in any way. That is general knowledge available to anyone who has the sense to compare dates.

[/QUOTE]It's all about respect and if you've got the boys to earn it [/B][/QUOTE]

Whatever that means, rest assured you have no respect from me.

Gary

All times are GMT +1. The time now is 03:13 PM.

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## Q&amp;A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Page 24 of 36   First   ...   14   15   16   17   18   19   20   21   22   23   24   25   26   27   28   29   30   31   32   33   34   ...   Last

ColonelHardisson

Tuesday, 15th October, 2002, 06:11 PM

As I recall, Gary, you had left TSR just prior to the release of Oriental Adventures (or was it just after?), which was 1985-86, and 2e was released in 1989.

I have the math skills, and the brains to use 'em... ;)

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 15th October, 2002, 09:39 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by ColonelHardisson****As I recall, Gary, you had left TSR just prior to the release of Oriental Adventures (or was it just after?), which was 1985-86, and 2e was released in 1989.******I have the math skills, and the brains to use 'em... ;)***

Heh, Colonel, and you have it.

Actually, I was effectively out of any TSR direction by fall of 1985, and I signed the agreement ending my association on New Years Eve of 1985, so officially I severed things at that time.

Cheers,  
Gary

Astragoth

Tuesday, 15th October, 2002, 10:40 PM

Just one thing to say Gary....

Thank you for giving me/us this game

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 15th October, 2002, 11:37 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Astragoth****Just one thing to say Gary....******Thank you for giving me/us this game***

Well shucks, Astragoth, my pleasure--and I mean that. I had one hell of a great time writing it, DMing and playing it, and I got paid too. Almost as good as being a rock & roll star, eh?

Anyway, I still love games and gaming as much as ever, although I can't play as long as I used to without suffering the next day. Liking tipping a few, the penalty for excess grows greater with advancing years....rolleyes:

Cheerio,  
Gary

JohnRTroy

Wednesday, 16th October, 2002, 12:53 AM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh****Here I am again after thinking I had slipped off this hook...******In developing some nasty inhabitants for Gehenna, I figured that the dreggals would be the most populous, not the most powerful. Thus you see lots of them in action--the proverbial cannon fodder for the greater creatures behind them. They carry out the tasks assigned, are expendable.******Gary***

So, then...if we're gonna talk about THAT stuff.



You wanna tell us what a Maelvi is (or however it's spelled) and what you envisioned THEM and their society to be like? :p

(

FYI To the board, Gary's never answered this question to me effectively for about 10 years now...so let's press him to answer the question THIS time, since everybody is paying attention. :rolleyes: :D :cool:

*If he dies before this is answered, I'll find a way to bind his spirit and put it into that nearby haunted condo complex until I get an answer! And if I die, I'll move in there and get the gang there to have a parade through his house every night!*

'tis the Halloween Spirit... :)

)

In all seriousness, I felt the Multiverse, the Planes and Spheres interpretation by others at TSR after you left, quite frankly, sucked.

---

Upper\_Krust

Wednesday, 16th October, 2002, 01:51 AM

Hi Gary! :)

Thanks for the information on Graz'zts waged battle (that point always vexed me somewhat).

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**Anyway, I still lobe games and gaming as much as ever,**

---

'Ear 'ear. :D

Sorry couldn't resist Gary. :o

---

MerricB

Wednesday, 16th October, 2002, 02:53 AM

G'day Gary!

Back again so soon? ;)

Just been looking over Mordenkainen's Fantastic Adventure again (a Fantasy u o ~~ad~~venture... oops!). I tried taking my character Meliander the Mage through that once... not good. Much respect for your playing skills from that experience!

Here's a question... how common were *wish* spells in your game? It seems that every time I look at tales of your characters exploits, a *wish* spell or two seems to be used to save them!

(Am I exaggerating? Possibly. Individual perception is a wonderful thing!)

Hmm... I notice that our 'local' mail order people have The Hermit in stock. I'll see if I can get it... Necropolis has renewed my interest in your adventures!

Cheers!

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 16th October, 2002, 04:55 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by JohnRTroy*

**So, then...if we're gonna talk about THAT stuff.**

**You wanna tell us what a Maelvi is (or however it's spelled) and what you envisioned THEM and their society to be like? :p**

(

**FYI To the board, Gary's never answered this question to me effectively for about 10 years now...so let's press him to answer the question THIS time, since everybody is paying attention. :rolleyes: :D :cool:**

***If he dies before this is answered, I'll find a way to bind his spirit and put it into that nearby haunted condo complex until I get an answer! And if I die, I'll move in there and get the gang there to have a parade through his house every night!***

**'tis the Halloween Spirit... :)**

)

***In all seriousness, I felt the Multiverse, the Planes and Spheres interpretation by others at TSR after you left, quite frankly, sucked.***

---

Et tu, JTRus?! Arrrgggg! That cruel thrust has finished me! Yet before I expire, I will say that the Maelvis were...cough...a race of...(choke)...very evil sort that...(gasp!)...too late, I am done for...

Don't despair though, the clever creative folks now in charge of the game can certainly supply the information :D

Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 16th October, 2002, 04:58 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Upper\_Krust*  
**Hi Gary! :)**

***Thanks for the information on Graz'zts waged battle (that point always vexed me somewhat).***

***'Ear 'ear. :D***

***Sorry couldn't resist Gary. :o***

---

Well, Upper\_Krust, you did note the typo, but you interpreted it wrong. I meant to enter "lob" as in "lob games." Always did that when someone irritated me.

Here comes a large and extremely heavy one at you now!

Heh :eek:

Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 16th October, 2002, 05:07 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by MerricB*  
**G'day Gary!**

***Back again so soon? ;)***

***Just been looking over Mordenkainen's Fantastic Adventure again (a Fantasy Word Adventure... oops!). I tried taking my character Meliander the Mage through that once... not good. Much respect for your playing skills from that experience!***

***Here's a question... how common were wish spells in your game? It seems that every time I look at tales of your characters exploits, a wish spell or two seems to be used to save them!***

***(Am I exaggerating? Possibly. Individual perception is a wonderful thing!)***

***Hmm... I notice that our 'local' mail order people have The Hermit in stock. I'll see if I can get it... Necropolis has renewed my interest in your adventures!***

***Cheers!***

---

Hi Merric!

My fellows call and I respond in expeditious manner;)

There were all too few wishes from my POV. Whenever one or another of my PCs discovered an item that granted one or more, that prize went into the common treasury, and they were kept for emergency rescue use, so to speak.

Later on, of course, Mordie, and then Bigby rose to sufficient level to cast the spell personally. Then potions of longevity became likewise prized items.

Now i trust that when you put The Hermit adventure into play, you will be using the LA game system version, right?

Heh,  
Gary

---

MerricB

Thursday, 17th October, 2002, 01:33 AM

Running The Hermit with Lejendary Adventures rules? I wish I could. I don't think I can even order it from my local mail-order place. They don't seem to have it on the catalogue!

Alas, ordering it on-line is not an option at this point. :(

So it'll be 3E, I'm afraid. I'll endeavour to keep the rules out of the way and keep the spirit of the adventure alive, in any case!

Though I'm going to be very interested to see the LA stats in the module. :)

Cheers!

---

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 17th October, 2002, 05:17 PM

LA Game Stats

Hi Merric!

Say, didn't we just meet on the Dragonsfoot boards? Heh...

When you get a look at the LA game material in THE HERMIT, don't blink or you'll miss it. The difference between a fast, rules-light game and one that is at the other pole, of you will :eek:

We have fiir distribution for the LA game in N.A. but elsewhere it is spotty indeed. Wish it were otherwise, but until the audience is larger that's not going to happen. A Catch 22 indeed, but we will manage to get past the hurdle in time ;)

Cheers,  
Gary

---

roytheodd

Saturday, 19th October, 2002, 12:37 AM

First off, I need to thank you Mr. Gygax. For the last 20 years my head has been full of wonder and merriment due to your game. You've given me a gift that allows me to exercise my imagination and to present my findings with friends and to share goodness and joy. Thank you for that.

My question for you, since you're still answering, is what prompted the use of Alignment Languages? I've never read a book, seen a film, or in any other way uncovered a clue as to why you created these. I can understand and appreciate them, but I never did figure out your source for the idea.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 19th October, 2002, 03:03 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by roytheodd*

**First off, I need to thank you Mr. Gygax. For the last 20 years my head has been full of wonder and merriment due to your game. You've given me a gift that allows me to exercise my imagination and to present my findings with friends and to share goodness and joy. Thank you for that.**

**My question for you, since you're still answering, is what prompted the use of Alignment Languages? I've never read a book, seen a film, or in any other way uncovered a clue as to why you created these. I can understand and appreciate them, but I never did figure out your source for the idea.**

---

Roytheodd, you are welcome, and as I so often say, I've surfe had a lot of fun too.

As for alignment languages, as I worked up the mindsets for the none, it seemed to me that each such groups would have developed their own patoise as a recognition means, more or less like sectrt societies have signs and signals to ID their fellows.

Never did I envisage characters announcing their moral-ethical (or lack thereof) beliefs and convictions. Rather, the alignment languages were meant to be the means by which one might discover a like-natured individual. Similarly, conveyance of information or general conversation was not contemplated using such "language."

Cheers,  
Gary

---

MerricB

Saturday, 19th October, 2002, 03:20 PM

G'day, Gary!

Somewhat akin to Masonic greeting rituals?

Cheers!

---

Mark

Saturday, 19th October, 2002, 03:21 PM

Howdy Gary,

I just wanted to be sure that you (and your family) knew about the Chicago Gameday being held at Game Plus on November 9th. There are still some seats available to play in the many games being run and a couple of the prizes being given might be familiar to you and yours (*The Hermit* and *The Lost City of Gaxmor*.) Matty Helms, who ran the RPGnet Gameday, will be in attendance again. I'll cross my fingers and hope that you can make it. Thanks! :)

Thread for the full details -

<http://enworld.cyberstreet.com/showt...threadid=21970>

---

Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 19th October, 2002, 03:29 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by MerricB*

**G'day, Gary!**

**Somewhat akin to Masonic greeting rituals?**

**Cheers!**

---

Well, now that you mention it, yes. I'd have referred to those we use in the Bavarian Illuminati, but no one is to know that we exist, of course...

Heh,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 19th October, 2002, 03:32 PM

Hi Mark,

It's unlikely I'll be making the event unless Chris Clark is attending...or somebody from Lake Geneva is driving down.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Mark

Saturday, 19th October, 2002, 04:00 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*  
**Hi Mark,**

***It's unlikely I'll be making the event unless Chris Clark is attending...or somebody from Lake Geneva is driving down.***

***Cheerio,***  
***Gary***

---

Chris is certainly welcome to come, also. If it turns out that you cannot make it down for the games, but have the need or chance to come visit that wonderful store on that day anyway, please do try to stop in around the mid-afternoon break time. I'm sure that everyone would be delighted to see you! :)

---

Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 19th October, 2002, 04:32 PM

As I have a lot of fun at such events, I'll do my best to get down there for sure.

Hope to see y'all there ;)

Gary

▼ Page 24 of 36   ◀◀ First   ◀ ...   14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 20 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 ...   ▶ Last ▶▶   Show 20 post(s) from this thread on one page

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## Q&amp;A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Page 25 of 36 First ... 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 ... Last

## Clangador

Monday, 21st October, 2002, 07:18 AM

Quote:

1 Attachment(s)

*Originally posted by roytheodd*

***My question for you, since you're still answering, is what prompted the use of Alignment Languages? I've never read a book, seen a film, or in any other way uncovered a clue as to why you created these. I can understand and appreciate them, but I never did figure out your source for the idea.***

I always thought that idea came for the black speech of the orcs in Middle Earth.

## Clangador

Monday, 21st October, 2002, 07:50 AM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***Well, now that you mention it, yes. I'd have referred to those we use in the Bavarian Illuminati, but no one is to know that we exist, of course...***

***Heh,  
Gary***

Hay Gary, I bet you didn't know I'm the founder of the dwarven Illuminati. Hmm, that gets me thinking, if you're a 'secret master' you might very well already know that. :eek:

## Clangador

Monday, 21st October, 2002, 07:53 AM

Gary,

Why is it that more of the original material from Castle Greyhawk didn't get published? I know there was EX1 & 2, and Isle of the Ape, but other than that, nothing.

## Clangador

Monday, 21st October, 2002, 07:55 AM

I'm on a roll here. One more question - do you ever get tired of us asking these kind of questions? ;)

## Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 21st October, 2002, 02:19 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Clangador*

***I always thought that idea came for the black speech of the orcs in Middle Earth.***

Noppers. That's merely justification for a separate orcish language.  
Gary

## Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 21st October, 2002, 02:27 PM

Hi Clangador!

Well damn! I guess it's a secret no longer :rolleyes:

The material from my GH castle-dungeons campaign didn't get generally published because I was playing it, and had no interest in trading off a perfectly good adventure setting for a few bucks.

As for answering wquestions a lot, well, I have become innured to it. Sometimes it is a lot of fun, other times a mild annoyance, so on balance it is generally entertaining to me, and I am happy to do it as it entertains and informs my fellow game fans.

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Black ice and Blackmoor? Valley of Mage?

I bought an Adventure called "City of the Gods" a long, long time ago. It was set in a world called "Greyhawk", and was pretty much about a ..er..

SPOILER ALERT FOR GREYHAWK PLAYERS...

about a space ship that landed in a place called Blackmoor. There were "iron golems" that were really robots, and "wands of magic missile" that were really ray guns. I don't know the details because I only read the back cover; I bought it so someone else could DM it. Alas, that never happened.

So to the question: Mr. Gygax, what's up with Blackmoor? And the black ice that the new Greyhawk gazeteer says covers that area? Is there really a space ship? Are the valley elves actually space refugees? Was the Rain of Colorless Fire an orbital bombardment?

Inquiring minds want to know. :)

---

Felon

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 06:04 AM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Felon*

***The drow abilities were given to them to highlight their unique nature and potency.***

***Cheers,  
Gary***

---

Salutations, Gary. Thanks for the spiffy game that has become one of the chief sources of pleasure in my so-called life. Hoping to see many, many more years of gaming goodness, so don't retire too soon, OK? :)

There was a thread over on the WotC board fairly recently about drow and their weapons. It dwelled on the fact that in 3e, the rule for drow weapons & armor degrading in sunlight was thrown out. Sean Reynolds' stated that rule was discarded intentionally because the only reason that rule existed in the first place was to "screw the players". Do you feel that statement, and the accompanying general sentiment expressed by others that AD&D drow were over-the-top and introduced solely to be the "ultimate party-killers", is at all fair and accurate?

On a broader tangent: hindsight being 20/20, do you think that there were monsters in AD&D that genuinely qualified as an over-the-top attempt at creating the biggest, baddest, PC-kilingest beastie (i.e. creatures that were probably more fun to design than to fight)?

---

Clangador

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 06:37 AM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***While I am most happy to have new participants pick up the LA game as their primary RPG, or as a change of pace "second system", I most certainly hate to see that happen for the reason you note: ( The ignorant attacks and prejudice against D&D are very unpalatable to me, and not mainly becuae I wrote so much of the game, but because those charges are so awfully wrong!***

***Cheerio,  
Gary***

---

I have never even seen LA in a game store. Not one single time. :confused: is it sold in game stores, or is it only availabe over the Internet?

---

Clangador

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 06:48 AM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Felon*

***There was a thread over on the WotC board fairly recently about drow and their weapons. It dwelled on the fact that in 3e, the rule for***

**drow weapons & armor degrading in sunlight was thrown out. Sean Reynolds' stated that rule was discarded intentionally because the only reason that rule existed in the first place was to "screw the players". Do you feel that statement, and the accompanying general sentiment expressed by others that AD&D drow were over-the-top and introduced solely to be the "ultimate party-killers", is at all fair and accurate?**

---

I read this about the drow weapons somewhere within the last day or two. I know it wasn't the WotC boards because I never ever go there. I find this to be rather annoying. Just throw away 20+ years of D&D history for no better reason than that is stupid. This kinda plays into the theme of the players should get all the treasure they want; the players should never have to face an encounter they can't beat and all that clap trap. I know this post wasn't meant for me, but I just had to say something.

---

Grazzt

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 07:19 AM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Clangador*

***I read this about the drow weapons somewhere within the last day or two. I know it wasn't the WotC boards because I never ever go there.***

---

Dragonsfoot.org is most likely where you saw it. There is a thread discussing the drow and their weapons and what SKR said going on over there.

---

Clangador

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 07:25 AM

By the way Gary,

How did you come up with the name Drow? I can't help but notice it's word spelled backwards.

---

ColonelHardisson

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 08:04 AM

"Drow" isn't a made-up word. I'm not 100% sure, but I think it comes from Norse mythology. I've seen variations of it, like "trow."

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 02:07 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Felon*

***Salutations, Gary. Thanks for the spiffy game that has become one of the chief sources of pleasure in my so-called life. Hoping to see many, many more years of gaming goodness, so don't retire too soon, OK? :)***

---

My pleasure, and do make sure that you spend some time having fun away from gaming, eh?

As for retiring, I don't think I'll be able to ever to that totally, but my creative work will be channeled into those areas I really want to play games in and about ;) How about Anglo-Saxon England or the American Indians resisting the influx of settlers? I'm up for some gaming there :eek:

Quote:

---

*There was a thread over on the WotC board fairly recently about drow and their weapons. It dwelled on the fact that in 3e, the rule for drow weapons & armor degrading in sunlight was thrown out. Sean Reynolds' stated that rule was discarded intentionally because the only reason that rule existed in the first place was to "screw the players". Do you feel that statement, and the accompanying general sentiment expressed by others that AD&D drow were over-the-top and introduced solely to be the "ultimate party-killers", is at all fair and accurate? [/B]*

---

Heh, and my opinion of Mr. Reynolds' statement must be self-censored. Given that the whole concept of the game is fantasy, what, pray tell, makes drow weapons disintegrating in the radiation from the sun any more unreasonable than just about everything else of fantastic nature in the game? More likely he was unable to find a rationale for the effect, and needing a rule for everything had to do as was done.

As for drow being too difficult to defeat, boo-hoo-hoo. Good players managed to do so with their PCs pretty handily, second-rate ones lost. Is the game to be a cake-walk or a challenge? Speaking for OAD&D, I can state the former was meant to be the case. As for 3E, well, you be the judge...

Quote:

---

*On a broader tangent: hindsight being 20/20, do you think that there were monsters in AD&D that genuinely qualified as an over-the-top attempt at creating the biggest, baddest, PC-killingest beastie (i.e. creatures that were probably more fun to design than to fight)? [/B]*

---

A very few of the AD&D monsters were meant to be near-unkillable. Those were done to pose a real challenge to PCs that were exceptionally well-equipped with magic items and of level above the usual--say 14th and above. After all, something had to be around that would pose a very real and difficult problem for such characters, no? Again, the game was meant to be such that no character could be invulnerable, unkillable. What fun would there be in such case?

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 02:12 PM

Quote:

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---

Originally posted by Clangador

***I have never even seen LA in a game store. Not one single time. :confused: is it sold in game stores, or is it only available over the Internet?***

---

Some game shops stock the Hekaforge product line, but not many, I fear. It has a relatively small audience demand compared to D20. As the line is carried by a number of distributors, Alliance amongst them, most shops should be able to order whatever LA game product you desire. If for some reason they are not willing to do so, a number of online suppliers carry the line, notably RPGme. You can hook up to them easily from [www.lejendary.com](http://www.lejendary.com)

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 02:16 PM

"DRow" in an Anglo-Saxon word. I found it in an old unexpurgated dictionary way back when. It means "dark elf." From that entry I created the drow race for AD&D, of course. There is no other background for them in myth or fable. Their characteristics were designed as they were to make them a suitable set of inhabitants of the subterranean world.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

herald

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 02:31 PM

Gary,  
What was your reasoning in disallowing gunpowder in Greyhawk?  
Was it a game balance choice or was it something you felt made Greyhawk special?

Was magic supposed to fade away and gunpowder become usable in the future or was it just not going to work at all. ( I realise that this question borders on pointlessness, as all that really matters in running a game is the current and near future. I just want to have a contextual understanding of why they weren't allowed in the game.)

I do understand that Murlynd was the exception to the rule. As a matter of course, I find a lot of what I read about him very interesting. He sounds like he was a lot of fun to play.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 03:13 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by herald*

**Gary,**

***What was your reasoning in disallowing gunpowder in Greyhawk?***

***Was it a game balance choice or was it something you felt made Greyhawk special?***

***Was magic supposed to fade away and gunpowder become usable in the future or was it just not going to work at all. ( I realise that this question borders on pointlessness, as all that really matters in running a game is the current and near future. I just want to have a contextual understanding of why they weren't allowed in the game.)***

***I do understand that Murlynd was the exception to the rule. As a matter of course, I find a lot of what I read about him very interesting. He sounds like he was a lot of fun to play.***

---

Adding functional gunpowder to a milieu already filled with active magic that did many things similar to what explosives do seemed both redundant and out of the spirit of a magic-active world. The changes that gunpowder wrought in history are manifold and evident. Furthermore, to bring it into the fantasy mix would mean not only more rules governing it, but more magic aimed at suppressing its effects.

As for it ever working, no. As Oerth was a different world, gunpowder and like acting (gas expansion) explosives were never meant to function in the future time there.

Cover it?

Cheers,  
Gary

---

bones\_mccoy

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 05:33 PM

Hi Gary,

Thanks for continuing to answer all our questions. I have a query regarding the OAD&D book Oriental Adventures.

In the 2E years David "Zeb" Cook always talked as though he wrote the whole thing by himself. Now I know this is not true but I was wondering what his contributions really were. What parts of the OA book did Zeb actually write?

To me it seems almost the entire book has the Gygax feel. The only area that may have been Cook-authored IMO seems to be the Kara-Tur bit at the end, but even that feels edited by you. Also, I must say I really love the martial arts rules in this book. So much fun, variety and imagination has been concentrated into those few pages it is quite amazing. It is also quite excellent how the whole book captures the feel of the Orient while still remaining an exceedingly playable OAD&D milieu. I for one feel you did a magnificent job on this tome and would have liked to see much more from you set in the Orient had you remained in charge of OAD&D. Did you have plans for continued exploration into the East?

Additionally, if you don't mind my asking, how were sales of the Oriental Adventures and Unearthed Arcana books? I assume they were both



considered successful? And although you left the company by this time, do you have any idea how the two Survival Guides sold, and the Manual of the Planes?

Although I have heard a lot of criticism of UA over the years, I have always enjoyed it immensely. You added some classic concepts to the game with the Cavalier and the Barbarian, and my group had a great deal of fun with them. Thanks again :)

---

herald

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 05:47 PM

---

Thanks Gary. That's very interesting.

I know it must seem like a silly question to ask, but it wandered around in the back of my mind.

▼ Page 25 of 36   ◀◀ First   ◀ ...   15   16   17   18   19   20   21   22   23   24   25   26   27   28   29   30   31   32   33   34   35 ...   ▶ Last ▶▶   [Show 20 post\(s\) from this thread on one page](#)

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## Q&A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Page 26 of 36    << First    ...    16   17   18   19   20   21   22   23   24   25   26   27   28   29   30   31   32   33   34   35   ...    Last >>    Show 20 post(s) from this thread on one page

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 05:54 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by bones\_mccoy*  
**Hi Gary,**

**Thanks for continuing to answer all our questions. I have a query regarding the OAD&D book Oriental Adventures.**

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Fact is, and as little fondness as I have for Mr. Cook, he speaks the truth when he claims primary authorship for the OA work. I conceived and outlined the work, Francois supplied a thick sheaf of material, and Zeb carries the ball from there, as Francois was not as able in English as he is in French (in which language he has been a best-selling author for about a decade now). As I was busy trying to keep TSR from forced bankruptcy, Zeb had his head, and I could manage only developmental editing at the end of the project. Frankly, had there been time, I would have had considerable rewriting done, as much of the material from Francois that I found superior to Zeb's, was not used.

Ain't you glad? ;)

Quote:

**Additionally, if you don't mind my asking, how were sales of the Oriental Adventures and Unearthed Arcana books? I assume they were both considered successful? And although you left the company by this time, do you have any idea how the two Survival Guides sold, and the Manual of the Planes?**

**Although I have heard a lot of criticism of UA over the years, I have always enjoyed it immensely. You added some classic concepts to the game with the Cavalier and the Barbarian, and my group had a great deal of fun with them. Thanks again :)**

While some "traditionalists" were boo-hoing about US, it sold very, very well, blowing off the shelves and providing the cash flow TSR needed to get it out of immediate trouble. The OA book sold less, but did very well nonetheless. In combination, those two books were what saved TSR as had been pared down and cleaned out.

I was not involved in the company when survival guides were released. From what I heard from inside sources, they were not very successful, although they did not lose money for TSR. Many of the planes was said to have done better than the two survival guides, but how much better I can't say.

Cheerio,  
Gary

alsih2o

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 06:02 PM

mistah G,

ever written any under a pseudonym?

just curious,

alsih2o

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 08:17 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by alsih2o*  
**mistah G,**

**ever written any under a pseudonym?**

**just curious,**

*alsih2o*

---

Heh, and yes. Once or twice. The principal one was "Ernst Grumbold." This was done mainly for a series of articles in the zine that supported the DJ game system. Also, I think I used "Garrison Ernst" for a (bad) novel I wrote way back in the 1970s.

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Clangador

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 09:17 PM

Re: Black ice and Blackmoor? Valley of Mage?

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Zaruthustran*

*about a space ship that landed in a place called Blackmoor. There were "iron golems" that were really robots, and "wands of magic missile" that were really ray guns. I don't know the details because I only read the back cover; I bought it so someone else could DM it. Alas, that never happened.*

*So to the question: Mr. Gygas, what's up with Blackmoor? And the black ice that the new Greyhawk gazetteer says covers that area? Is there really a space ship? Are the valley elves actually space refugees? Was the Rain of Colorless Fire an orbital bombardment?*

---

*Inquiring minds want to know. :) [/B]*

Here's what I've heard about this:

Blackmoor was Dave Arneson's original fanatsy campaign that predates D&D. I think some of the D&D rules grew out of stuff Arnesons used in his own private game. Blackmoor is a smallish kingdom. To the North is the Land of Black Ice. Arneson took Gary Gygas (playing Mordenkainen) and Rob Kuntz (playing Robilar) through an adventure to "The City of the Gods." More details about that can be found at this URL.

<http://www.tc.umn.edu/~monax002/Council/OJ6/city.html>

The City of the Gods was also detailed in the module "DA3 The City of the Gods." It was a crashed spaceship or something like that. Don't remember the details.

Most fans of Greyhawk don't think the Blackmoor in Greyhawk isn't the same one as in Arneson's campaign.

I've never heard of those theories for the Rain of Colorless Fire and Valley Elves. I doubt they are true.

---

Flexor the Mighty!

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 09:28 PM

Hello Gary!

Any chance we will see any more adventures from you for 3e? Not campaign length megadeals but a classic Gygas dungeon? Necropolis looks cool, but after running The Return to the Temple of Elemental Evil it's just too much. I'm looking for smaller mods at the moment. More flexibility IMO. Either way thanks for 17 years of gaming.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 09:54 PM

Howdy Flexor,

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Flexor the Mighty!*  
**Hello Gary!**

***Any chance we will see any more adventures from you for 3e? Not campaign length megadeals but a classic Gygas dungeon? Necropolis looks cool, but after running The Return to the Temple of Elemental Evil it's just too much. I'm looking for smaller mods at the moment. More flexibility IMO. Either way thanks for 17 years of gaming.***

Well, seeing as how I find the 3E system's rules very constraining and combersome in regards to design and innovation, I doubt I'll be doing much in the way of such adventure material--at least directly. I have finished a super module, HALL OF MANY PANES, using the LA game system as a base, and Jon Creffield is developing it for the 3E system. This is a long, campaign-type work, but it is not a "killer dungeon" as some have classed NECROPOLIS as being. (I thought of it as a highly challengng adventure for able players with strong PCs, nit as an exercise to exterminate characters. but I suppose the rash and inept will not likely survive such a test...)

Have you had a look at THE HERMIT? It is fairly lengthy. has some unusual aspects, and will likely keep a team of adventurers bust over at least a dozen play sessions of four-hour length.

Frankly, it is hard work to write new adventure material that is interesting, challenging, and quite different from what I have previously done, so I undertake such projects with deliberate care, not to say reluctance :rolleyes:

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Flexor the Mighty!

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 10:47 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*  
**Howdy Flexor,**

<snip>

not a "killer dungeon" as some have classed NECROPOLIS as being. (I thought of it as a highly challengng adventure for able players with strong PCs, nit as an exercise to exterminate characters. but I suppose the rash and inept will not likely survive such a test...)

Cheers,  
Gary

---

It is my duty as a DM to punish player stupidity. With death if necessary! And sometimes a group of PC's will come across something that is far beyond their ability to defeat. If they chose to try and battle it and the entire party is slaughtered so be it.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 23rd October, 2002, 11:13 PM

Flexor,

That's pretty well the way I run my campaigns. It is expected that players will use discernment and sound judgement when it comes to something that is out of the ordinary and seems particularly difficult, threatening, and potentially fatal,--because it most probably is :eek:

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Clangador

Thursday, 24th October, 2002, 02:50 AM

In Castle Greyhawk, what is the living room?

---

Clangador

Thursday, 24th October, 2002, 02:59 AM

Quote:

Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh

*Some game shops stock the Hekaforge product line, but not many, I fear. It has a relatively small audience demand compared to D20. As the line is carried by a number of distributors, Alliance amongst them, most ships should be able to order whatever LA game product you desire. If for some reason they are not willing to do do, a number of online suppliers carry the line, notably RPGme. You can hook up to them easily from [www.lejendary.com](http://www.lejendary.com)*

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Thanks. Did you say there is a mailing list you post your group's sessions to?

---

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 24th October, 2002, 05:30 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Clangador  
*In Castle Greyhawk, what is the living room?*

---

A PC of mine actually adventured in "The Living Room" when Rob was running a separate campaign. It became a part of GH castle when Rob became my co-DM. I suspect you can pretty well guess what the encounter entails... ;)

Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 24th October, 2002, 05:41 PM

Quote:

Originally posted by Clangador

*Thanks. Did you say there is a mailing list you post your group's sessions to?*

---

In theory I post game session reports to the [www.lejendary.com](http://www.lejendary.com) website, but I often forget :rolleyes:

Where I always remember to post is to my games email list: [gygax-games-subscribe@egroups.com](mailto:gygax-games-subscribe@egroups.com) Last week we cancelled the session, though, because a couple of the players had other engagements, and I've just cancelled tonight's game because I am not feeling very well--some lousy little "flu"-like bug is all, nothing serious, but I plan to be pretty quiet today, get some rest so as to shake it off and get back to work ;)

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Clangador

Thursday, 24th October, 2002, 06:15 PM

[QUOTE]Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh

[B]

Where I always remember to post is to my games email list: [gygax-games-subscribe@egroups.com](mailto:gygax-games-subscribe@egroups.com)

Sweet mother of Cthulhu, that list gets a lot of posts. :D

---

RSKennan

Thursday, 24th October, 2002, 06:20 PM

Hi Gary,  
I hope you feel better!

I'm the guy who started the "goofiness in games" thread in your Yahoo group a while back. I've played since first edition, and one thing I've noticed is a loss of inherent flavor in the rules as subsequent generations are born. In it's current incarnation the onus to inject flavor seems to rest squarely on the DM and the group. I understand that Necromancer Games prides itself on a 1st edition flavor, but what advice would you give groups who want to play in the 1st edition spirit using 3e rules? Is such a thing possible in your opinion?

Thank you for some of the best years of my life.

---

RSKennan

Thursday, 24th October, 2002, 06:23 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by RSKennan*

**<snip>**

***Thank you for some of the best years of my life.***

---

And not just reading this thread either!:D

---

Clangador

Friday, 25th October, 2002, 08:06 AM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by RSKennan*

***And not just reading this thread either!:D***

---

Warning, reading this whole thread in one sitting can cause your eyes to bleed. :eek:

---

jasper

Friday, 25th October, 2002, 02:34 PM

1st edition feel. Don't worry about following the rules to the letter.

Ex. Mr. Fred from the speaker in dreams module is invading my pcs dreams. I give them a save to keep from letting information slip and opposed roll to wake up.

Or just create a new monster cat call DM Special which does not have to follow the rules. Ex. I had 2ed snowman which threw snow balls. 1 per hit dice. Plus some could cast Otto dance with a little less power.

by the rules I can't do that with any of the current creature types But I am going to.

Do worry about following the rules to exact letter. Have a fun campaign. I just waiting on my players to convert their old characters to 3rd so I can show them how mean a green dragon and vampire team up can be.

Oh on the survival guides. I did like them BUT they should have been 1 book. After that I would just pick up modules.

1st edition feel. Never give dumb players a break. Or as KODT says WHAT you want to know if you lived after taking a face full of dragon breath, taking a 300 foot swan dive into a pool of boiling hot lava.

My wife love the cover art on your Slayers Guide to Dragons. She said to tell the artist nice work. I would suggest any new DMs pick it up. Most of old guys have read your articles in Dragon and don't really need it.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 25th October, 2002, 04:07 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by RSKennan*

***Hi Gary,***

***I hope you feel better!***

***I'm the guy who started the "goofiness in games" thread in your Yahoo group a while back. I've played since first edition, and one thing I've noticed is a loss of inherent flavor in the rules as subsequent generations are born. In it's current incarnation the onus to inject flavor seems to rest squarely on the DM and the group. I understand that Necromancer Games prides itself on a 1st edition flavor, but what advice would you give groups who want to play in the 1st edition spirit using 3e rules? Is such a thing possible in your opinion?***

***Thank you for some of the best years of my life.***

---

IMO a good session needs some drama, the feeling that danger and death are ever-present, and usually a good measure of humor.

As for 3E capturing the feel of OAD&D, I don't think so--too rules-heavy and too focused on power, A whole different game, a completely different spirit.

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 25th October, 2002, 04:09 PM

---

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by RSKennan*

---

***And not just reading this thread either!:D***

---

ROTFLMAO

Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 25th October, 2002, 04:16 PM

---

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by jasper*

***1st edition feel. Don't worry about following the rules to the letter.***

***Ex. Mr. Fred from the speaker in dreams module is invading my pcs dreams. I give them a save to keep from letting information slip and opposed roll to wake up.***

***Or just create a new monster cat call DM Special which does not have to follow the rules. Ex. I had 2ed snowman which threw snow balls. 1 per hit dice. Plus some could cast Otto dance with a little less power.***

***by the rules I can't do that with any of the current creature types But I am going to.***

---

Yes, those are some valid observations. OAD&D encouraged and in some instances facilitated innovation and had flexible rules that did not require an explanation for everything.

---

Quote:

---

***Do worry about following the rules to exact letter. Have a fun campaign. I just waiting on my players to convert their old characters to 3rd so I can show them how mean a green dragon and vampire team up can be.***

---

That is certainly blasphemy to many 3E players ;)

---

Quote:

---

***1st edition feel. Never give dumb players a break. Or as KODT says WHAT you want to know if you lived after taking a face full of dragon breath, taking a 300 foot swan dive into a pool of boiling hot lava.***

---

Well, perhaps not quite that harsh, but as in chess, if you expect to win, know how to play the game...

Cheers,  
Gary

ColonelHardisson

Friday, 25th October, 2002, 05:16 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***Yes, those are some valid observations. OAD&D encouraged and in some instances facilitated innovation and had flexible rules that did not require an explanation for everything.***

This is true, but the main flexibility of the rules was their nonexistence. 3e/d20 tries to give at least general guidelines that, in the hands of an experienced group of gamers, are as easy to access and use as house rules made on the fly, and which result in a more consistent game. I think the mistake could be made in believing that 3e/d20 fans slavishly devote themselves to making sure every rule is followed to the letter; that may occur on the internet, but in practice I don't see it happening.

I can tell you this - the OAD&D or 1e spirit is still alive and well in the games I play, no matter what system is used. It's all a matter of who is actually playing the game, not the system itself. Instead of trying to remember how we handled each and every occurrence of something not covered in the rules, we now have at least a self-consistent source to which we can refer, rather than relying upon sometimes arbitrary, sometimes conflicting, and often-changing house rulings.

I'm not trying to somehow "prove" one game or edition is better than another; that would be impossible, as games, like fiction, gain much of their resonance from being digested by the individual. I'm not one of the 3e bunch strutting and proselytizing. I'm just wanting to set forth what it is that I, a gamer from long back, like about the new game, and how it fits my needs. That doesn't mean the old game is crap or inferior. Quite the contrary; HackMaster, for example, has helped me remember what it was I loved about 1e back in the day.

Oh yeah, Gary - Necropolis kicks ass! I'm extremely pleased with this book! I'd love to see more like it from you.

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 25th October, 2002, 06:27 PM

Well, Colonel...

What can I say? Aside from the fact that the rules omissions in OAD&D were generally done on purpose, so as to not shackle DMs and those writing for the system, and to definately have a game where everything was not quantified or explained, What you nort is valid IMO. A game is indeed just that. Its merits exist in the eyes of the players, little else.

Cheers,  
Gary

ColonelHardisson

Friday, 25th October, 2002, 10:26 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*  
***Well, Colonel...***

***What can I say? Aside from the fact that the rules omissions in OAD&D were generally done on purpose, so as to not shackle DMs and those writing for the system, and to definately have a game where everything was not quantified or explained, What you nort is valid IMO. A game is indeed just that. Its merits exist in the eyes of the players, little else.***

***Cheers,***  
***Gary***

Yes, I see what you mean, and I have assumed that many of the omissions (for lack of a better word) of the elder editions was due to a desire to keep the game uncluttered in many cases. I remember playing very early on, where we improvised/house ruled a lot of stuff based on what we felt the characters (and monsters) would know how to do, and the chance they had to do it. I will acknowledge that such "white space" is desirable for those who wish to use player prerogative more often. I will offer this thought, though, as I did above - I think that many of the players of the new edition can - and do - run their games as spontaneously as many of us did/do with the older editions. The new edition just gives more of a way to "eyeball" how to run the game.

I also think that once players and designers get more comfortable with the new system - or work with those who have - then the game will seem much less like shackles.

...by the way, will you be attending GenCon once it moves to Indy?

---

Caedrel

Friday, 25th October, 2002, 11:22 PM

Wow - still here?

---

Hi Gary!

Amazing! This thread is still going... I thought we had farewelled you from this discussion ages ago :)

Still, since you're still hereabouts, I actually had a question that occurred to me as I read the latest posts. It may have been asked somewhere else, but I don't roam the internet very much and haven't seen it...

How have the dice (number of sides, etc) evolved in D&D? Other games I've seen tend to use multiple d6s with maybe a different value on one side, but I love the number and variety of dice in D&D, as well as rolling them (even if some do get a bit lonely - I feel especially fond of the d12 in this respect :)). Were there always the d4, d6, d8, d10, d12 and d20 in D&D?

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 25th October, 2002, 11:34 PM

Well, Fellow Colonel...

Some prefer to fill in, others to excise.

Currently, though, the 3E buffs tend to want \*more\* rules and adherence to the letter of the rules, so I am not convinced that the free-wheeling and innovative phase is likely to develop as you project ;)

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 25th October, 2002, 11:41 PM

Re: Wow - still here?

---

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Caedrel*  
**Hi Gary!**

**Amazing! This thread is still going... I thought we had farewelled you from this discussion ages ago :)**

---

Heh, and indeed, I go along for a few days and then lo and behold! Another post to this thread, another gamer who would appreciate my response, so how can I not do so?

Still, since you're still hereabouts, I actually had a question that occurred to me as I read the latest posts. It may have been asked somewhere else, but I don't roam the internet very much and haven't seen it...

Quote:

---

***How have the dice (number of sides, etc) evolved in D&D? Other games I've seen tend to use multiple d6s with maybe a different value on one side, but I love the number and variety of dice in D&D, as well as rolling them (even if some do get a bit lonely - I feel especially fond of the d12 in this respect :)). Were there always the d4, d6, d8, d10, d12 and d20 in D&D?***

---

Indeed, from the inception of the game with OD&D, the Platonic solids were included. There were no d20s per se, then. They were numbered 0-9 twice, so you had to color in half the faces for 10 plus the number, or else roll another die with that one to get a 1-20 range.

Now I include a d30 in the LA game, although it isn't used much. I also have a d7 that's useful but not called for in the rules. A d7 and d4 in conjunction give you the day of the lunar month, of course :) Also handy for random determination of something when there are seven characters involved.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

ColonelHardisson

Saturday, 26th October, 2002, 04:02 AM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*  
**Well, Fellow Colonel...**

***Some prefer to fill in, others to excise.***

***Currently, though, the 3E buffs tend to want \*more\* rules and adherence to the letter of the rules, so I am not convinced that the free-wheeling and innovative phase is likely to develop as you project ;)***

***Cheers,***  
***Gary***

---

I understand what you're saying. I can only relate what I've witnessed first hand, and, of course, anecdotal evidence is usually only of use in determining what is going on in a small area. I'm guessing that veteran gamers like myself and older will play D&D much as we always have, regardless of the edition. Gamers who got into the game more recently may play quite differently. I honestly believe, though, that veteran gamers and designers could influence how any generation of gamers plays simply by way of example.



And hey - will you be attending GenCon when it goes to Indy?

---

Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 26th October, 2002, 04:52 PM

Morning Colonel:)

We are in agreement about veteran gamers, DMs and players alike. They will most certainly use what they consider the good parts of the system they play, discard, alter, replace what doesn't suit them.

There is a very large audience that is not hardcore, don't read RPG zines, don't roam the boards, don't go to cons. just play with their group and have fun thus. Reaching this audience is difficult in the extreme. If WotC were publishing and promoting 3E support material of the sort that somehow "trained" these participants, then it might be that some considerable number of them would become like veteran participants. That this is not happening means that the majority is left on their own with the core material, likely the epic book.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Clangador

Saturday, 26th October, 2002, 07:59 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***Do worry about following the rules to exact letter. Have a fun campaign. I just waiting on my players to convert their old characters to 3rd so I can show them how mean a green dragon and vampire team up can be.***

-----

***That is certainly blasphemy to many 3E players***

***Gary***

---

Many, but not all. Some of us actually know what we're doing. :rolleyes:

I realize 3e has a wee bit to many rules. I met a 3e "rulez" lawyer the other day, he made me cringe. The way this guy stroked the rules was insane. He got things done, but it just seemed "unclean" to do things to get an advantage in the rules and make playing secondary. It's just not right.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 26th October, 2002, 08:30 PM

My belief is that the rules for an RPG should facilitate the enjoyment of the game for all concerned. If they get in the way then they are no good.

Whatever system brings fun for the group is fine. Hopefully the rules will be such as to enable that enjoyment to be for as long a period of play as the group wishes to experience.

Players who attempt to use the rules as a stick to beat players, or the GM, the latter thus enhancing their character in the game, are anethma to me. Hells bells! If some player in a game I am running demonstrates to me that some rule I have written makes no sense in the situation at hand. or I happen to discern that without such "encouragement," I toss the book out the proverbial window for the case at hand, and likely take a hard look at the material for continued application. Everybody makes errors...

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Mathew\_Freeman

Saturday, 26th October, 2002, 08:44 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***Players who attempt to use the rules as a stick to beat players, or the GM, the latter thus enhancing their character in the game, are anethma to me.***

---

This should be on a T-shirt, or at least a poster. :D

Gygax speaks! All thee who are munchkins, take note of his wisdom! :p

---

Helspar

Sunday, 27th October, 2002, 01:57 AM

Thanks for taking the time to answer the questions here Colonel!

But here are some more for you:

A bit back you mentioned Mordenkainen and Robilar and I got to wondering who are the players behind the other original iconic characters such as Bigby, Otiluke, Leomund, etc.? Are any of them still played? Any converted over to 3rd ?

Have you ever noticed any of the cameos you have made in some of the old modules? Example: There's a spellbook in Baltron's Beacon that has a page signed by a Eggy Gax. Hmmm. In the old Companion set there's an NPC listed as "Sir Guy de Gax". Coincidence? I think not. :)

---

Quote:

*Originally posted by Helspar*

**Thanks for taking the time to answer the questions here Colonel!**

**But here are some more for you:**

**A bit back you mentioned Mordenkainen and Robilar and I got to wondering who are the players behind the other original iconic characters such as Bigby, Otiluke, Leomund, etc.? Are any of them still played? Any converted over to 3rd ?**

**Have you ever noticed any of the cameos you have made in some of the old modules? Example: There's a spellbook in Baltron's Beacon that has a page signed by a Eggy Gax. Hmmm. In the old Companion set there's an NPC listed as "Sir Guy de Gax". Coincidence? I think not. :)**

Sure, and happy to comment:)

Bigby was a PC of mine who started out as a henchman, the apprentice, of Mordenkainen. Otiluke is a created NPC based on my son Luke's PCs, and Leomund is a created NPC of Len Lakofka. Tenser was a PC of my son Ernie. Keoghtom and Heward are created NPCs, and Murlynd is the same, but based on Don Kay's original PC in D&D. Nystul is the actual surname of a person, Brad Nystul, a stage magician. A lot of this information is posted somewhere online ;)

As for the other names, I hadn't noticed, but fair is fair. As I did that plenty, so too others, eh? All in fun.

Cheers,  
Gary

---

## Clangador

Sunday, 3rd November, 2002, 03:43 AM

[QUOTE]Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh

[B]Morning Colonel:)

There is a very large audience that is not hardcore, don't read RPG zines, don't roam the boards, don't go to cons. just play with their group and have fun thus. Reaching this audience is difficult in the extreme. If WotC were publishing and promoting 3E support material of the sort that somehow "trained" these participants, then it might be that some considerable number of them would become like veteran participants. That this is not happening means that the majority is left on their own with the core material, likely the epic book.[QUOTE]

What? Not everyone is a "hardcore" gamer like me? Not everyone roams the boards? :D ;)

---

## bigdndfan

Sunday, 3rd November, 2002, 06:37 AM

You've been quite polite about...

My Gygax, I have a few questions. I have noticed in the countless responses you have made to this highly curious group of people you have been quite successful in avoiding being critical about a myriad of people and subjects that you have been asked about.

While as a life skill, not burning bridges is a good one to hone, the curious fellow that I am would like to know some of your more candid thoughts. I'm not asking for you to throw around cheap insults, just your opinions.

I played the Temple of Elemental Evil, perhaps my favorite module ever, and are now playing the 'Return'(not quite so favorite). Have you had the chance to read it over?

If so, what do you think the secret lord of the ToEE being Big T? There are other several major modifications from your classic. Did you have any responses initial or otherwise that you would feel comfortable sharing with us?

You have stated in several places that the philosophy and gaming structure of 3e is not to your liking. OK, on the surface anyone could have guessed that. The creator of a system that has been played for years would most likely see the strengths of their system and the flaws of the newest and very different version of their game. What in particular do you dislike?

A common complaint is the amount of detail for each character now, the listing of feats, skills etc,... One character has several paragraphs. It could get in the way of a good gaming session.

Another complaint is skill checks take over role-playing. Which also could happen if the players have no interest in role-playing but just hack and slash.

Do you have these concerns?

Do you not like the idea of feats? Or prestige classes? Prestige classes soon after its inception lost the original intent, namely a member of an organization that does a series of specialized tasks. A modern prestige class might be a psychiatrist who has to learn many other skills to become a member.

Or the reason why you have been vague in your comments because it's the whole package you are adverse to and you cannot pin point particular things that you do not like.

I can't imagine how I would feel about inventing something, then through a horrific series of events having it taken from me, prodded, experimented on and adjusted for a host of less than noble reasons.

I am gratified that you have managed to overcome the many personal and professional obstacles that have been put in front of you and you are working on projects that you find engaging.

Many of us 3e players that started out with OAD&D are in an unusual spot. We have always thought of you fondly whatever version we play, but as teenagers we quite passively continued with the system that was being supported. We now play 3e and enjoy it, but knowing at the same time

you do not care for it.

Perhaps I've answered my own question about your disinterest in 3e. But if I may be so intrusive and if you will pardon my impertinence, if you have a few more words on the subject, I'm sure I'm not the only one on this board would very much like to hear/read it.

---

**bones\_mccoy**

Sunday, 3rd November, 2002, 12:40 PM

The following question is a very minor point but it is something that I have always wondered about:

In Dragon #103, Nov. '85 you wrote an article called "The Future of the Game" about your vision of a second edition game. In this article you said:

"There are bound to be a few other additions to the player's book. For instance, I have discovered that I neglected to include a fairly common medieval weapon in both the Players Handbook and Unearthed Arcana. Zounds! What slipshod research on my part!"

What is this weapon? (I told you it was a minor point ;) )

---

**Col\_Pladoh**

Sunday, 3rd November, 2002, 02:56 PM

**The Thread that Will Not Die**

Clangador,

How right you are. In my group of five active players, nary a one has an interest in such things, but they do buy a fair amount of gaming products.

Bigdndfan,

"Gary" is fine if you like, and noppers. I haven't seen the RttToEE, so I can't comment.

Over some decades of gaming, the creation of some number of RPG systems, I have come to the point where I prefer a rules-light system, one that is skill-bundle based. I do not like to rule-play, and as a GM I find long lists of stats and the like tedious. Such things tend to get in the way for my style of play, including as a PC. While I do enjoy plenty of roll-playing (after all I am a military miniatures player too), centering the game on combat seems fatuous to me. I want a game that facilitates all of the elements of the RPG. So you are correct in assuming that the 3E system is not my cup of tea. As I've stated before, I don't mind playing a PC in a game using the system; indeed I have a good time. It is simply that I enjoy other systems much more--any yes, that includes OAD&D. I have no axe to grind in this matter, though. If lots of people are having a great time playing 3E, that's fine:) If my adventure material adds to that enjoyment, so much the better, as I don't feel alienated from fellows who play different system than I do, but to feel unconstrained in writing it, I work in a different system, and thus the dual-system module, THE HERMIT, and one massive one in the works, HALL OF MANY PANES.

Bones\_mccoy,

Got me! :( That piece was written back in 1985, and I've no idea any longer what the weapon was I'd neglected to detail. As is no secret, all of my notes, books, games, etc. stored in my office at TSR were seized in 1985 and never returned to me, so likely the notes on it were in that material.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

**Theuderic**

Sunday, 3rd November, 2002, 03:29 PM

**Re: The Thread that Will Not Die**

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*  
**Clangador,**

***As is no secret, all of my notes, books, games, etc. stored in my office at TSR were seized in 1985 and never returned to me, so likely the notes on it were in that material.***

***Cheerio,***  
***Gary***

I didn't know that. That's terrible, why did they do that?

---

**Col\_Pladoh**

Sunday, 3rd November, 2002, 04:16 PM

**Re: Re: The Thread that Will Not Die**

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Theuderic*

***I didn't know that. That's terrible, why did they do that?***

Oh dear, another can of worms inadvertently opened.

Theuderic, the woman who became the majority shareholder of the company was not what one would term a "nice person," in any sense of the term I can envision. She claimed whatever was in the office was corporate property, and without suing over the matter there was no recourse but to let it go. Amongst the lost items were all of my old A/D&D books, many signed works by other authors, and a D&D cartoon show poster I had had framed at my expense, of course. Perversely, she did allow my office furniture to come to me, stuff I didn't particularly want.

All water long passed under the bridge...

Cheerio,  
Gary

## Clangador

Sunday, 3rd November, 2002, 07:09 PM

Re: The Neverending Thread. . .

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*  
**Clangador,**

**How right you are. In my group of five active players, nary a one has an interest in such things, but they do buy a fair amount of gaming products.**

u ao d thif g with o d e l 3 1 f s t k f 1 w a h a y a r t l w a r g a b a y d r s s , t l t h d r t h a f o y s d l f t h a t i s e

Qu 1 t d :

*That piece was written back in 1985, and I've no idea any longer what the weapon was I'd neglected to detail. As is no secret, all of my notes, books, games, etc. stored in my office at TSR were siezed in 1985 and never returned to me, so likely the notes on it were in that material.*

That's harsh. Why was T&R so scared of you? They seize your notes. They sue you for the Dangerous Journey system? What was wrong with these people that they were so bent on causing you a hard time? I think history has proven who were the villains in that particular affair.

All times are GMT +1. The time now is 03:13 PM.

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## Q&amp;A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Page 28 of 36    &lt;&lt; First    ...    18    19    20    21    22    23    24    25    26    27    28    29    30    31    32    33    34    35    36    &gt; Last &gt;&gt;    Show 20 post(s) from this thread on one page

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 4th November, 2002, 03:20 PM

Re: Re: The Neverending Thread. . .

Quote:

*Originally posted by Clangador*

***That's harsh. Why was TSR so scared of you? They seize your notes. They sue you for the Dangerous Journey system? What was wrong with these people that they were so bent on causing you a hard time? I think history has proven who were the villains in that particular affair.***

From what I can make of it, it seems there was much personal enmity involved in the matter. I dared to contest Lorraine Williams right to control the company, and she disagreed with all that I wished to do with TSR--put quality product first, not aim at profits over all, allow employee ownership, etc. So when she took over she apparently wanted to both bury me even as she seemed to milk the company for all she could gain from it.

Right you are about the historical results showing that Williams was absolutely unsuited to manage the company. It is not very comforting to the AD&D fans, though...

Cheerio,  
Gary

Vargo

Tuesday, 5th November, 2002, 04:37 PM

Hello there, Gary!

I'm a long-time player of your creation, and had a question for you about the spell level progression chart.

A certain local story hour, currently in the incarnation of "The Rape of Morne," but previously known as "Lady Despina's Virtue," and "The Heretic of Wyre," refers to the different spell levels as "valences," such as those of the electron shell of your average atom. It's a marvelous image, and I'd like to continue to imagine that you drew your inspiration for the spells per day chart from that image, but I'm willing to risk my illusions for truth.

Also, do you read any of the story hours on this site?

Thank you for your gift to us,  
Thane

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 5th November, 2002, 05:04 PM

Vargo,

The spell levels I devised were for game balance and logic within the system. If from that basis someone can extrapolate an interesting name and story, more power to 'em! In short, go for it.

No, I don't read story hour posts. With all the board postings, email, business correspondence, and creative work here for me each day, about the only reading-for-pleasure I manage is some history or other non-fiction and an occasional novel. At least my book purchase bills are not excessive these days...

Cheers,  
Gary

ranix65

Tuesday, 5th November, 2002, 09:51 PM

OK, this is gonna make no sense, but basically, I just had to ask, because I'm sick of hearing it from my friend's brother:

Dear Gygax,

My friend's older brother is...a psycho. He said that he's going to Florida to learn how to program video games from the guy "who really created D&D." When I mentioned your name, his response was, "no, the guy who REALLY created D&D." Can you just answer one question for me, oh great one: Does this guy exist, or is my friend's brother just blowing smoke? Because I'm getting pretty tired of hearing it.

So basically, the question is: Did somebody else develop D&D before you and does that person now program computer/video games?

Sorry if this sounds kinda pedantic, but it's really getting to me.

Rel

Tuesday, 5th November, 2002, 10:25 PM

He Gary, I got an idea for you:

I don't know if you've spotted the thread floating around on the General Board, but one of ENWorld's members, The Jester, is travelling all over the U.S. seeing places he's never seen and meeting people he's never met, including many ENWorlders.

From what I've seen, he is also stopping over to stay with some of these folks, sleeping on their couch and gaming with them.

This got me thinking that when you feel in the mood for a several month vacation, what you need to do is get yourself an RV and drive all over the country meeting people from the boards and sitting in on their games for a session. I suggest the RV because you probably don't want to have to sleep on anybody's couch (the older I get, the less attractive sleeping on any couch but my own has become). But maybe everybody you visit could make you dinner or something like that.

Now I say this sort of half jokingly, but it would be one of the coolest things I can imagine to see you journey all over the country and getting to actually experience gaming with dozens of groups who owe one of their favorite hobbies to you. And hey, if you retire like this, you might never pay for a meal again. :) Who needs Social Security when you've got an RV and huge fans?

Anyway, I thought of this on a whim and just thought I'd toss it out there. But if you do decide to do it, put me first on the list. Ok?

I've got the Bombay Gin just waiting for you (yeah, I'm that guy).

---

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 5th November, 2002, 10:32 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by ranix65*

***So basically, the question is: Did somebody else develop D&D before you and does that person now program computer/video games?***

---

Florida is where Dave Arneson is located, and Dave has credit as co-creator of the D&D game. Maybe he means him. I think Dave does some computer programming work, although what his credits there are I don't know.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 5th November, 2002, 10:36 PM

Rel,

Really not a bad idea that, except I have a family and need to work to support them...

We have taken side trips now and then in our travels, made stops at game shops to meet the folks that way. It's possible we'll do a bit of that next spring if I make an appearance at an arms & armor museum. Time is the main problem, though.

Cheers,  
Gary

---

ranix65

Tuesday, 5th November, 2002, 10:37 PM

Alright, thanx 4 the info.

---

RSKennan

Tuesday, 5th November, 2002, 11:25 PM

What if someone were willing to fund the trip (I don't have the cash) in exchange for filming it as a documentary. When I was reading the above post, I couldn't help but think what a great documentary it would make! It would be great, the whole family could go... I'm just daydreaming here.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 6th November, 2002, 01:50 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by RSKennan*

***What if someone were willing to fund the trip (I don't have the cash) in exchange for filming it as a documentary. When I was reading the above post, I couldn't help but think what a great documentary it would make! It would be great, the whole family could go... I'm just daydreaming here.***

---

That's a horse of a different color, and sure. Such an arrangement could work. I have actually spend a three-day weekend DMins (OAD&D) for a group that flew me out and put me up at a motel with a suite where we played. It took me about two weeks to set up the adventure, and I lucked out. They finished it on Sunday night around eight o'clock :eek:

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Rel

Wednesday, 6th November, 2002, 02:47 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by RSKennan*

***What if someone were willing to fund the trip (I don't have the cash) in exchange for filming it as a documentary. When I was reading the above post, I couldn't help but think what a great documentary it would make! It would be great, the whole family could go... I'm just***

*daydreaming here.*

---

I've gotta say that I think this is a fantastic idea. Seriously. I would love to watch such a documentary and it could actually be a great way to promote our hobby.

I wonder if anybody here at the boards has any such connections? I'm tempted to start a new thread to find out. But I'll wait for a bit more confirmation from you, Gary, before I do anything like that.

It is really just a pipe dream at the moment, but I really do think it could be a valid idea in some form or fashion.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 6th November, 2002, 03:15 PM

A couple of caveats:

There have been a lot of documentary productions done in the past couple of years, and there's not likely much chance of actually getting another aired so as to recoup expense, let alone make any return.

Second, any gaming done for such a production will have to be scripted, the players selected for their appearance and acting ability. Not much of a game coming from that....

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Clangador

Wednesday, 6th November, 2002, 05:56 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***That's a horse of a different color, and sure. Such an arrangement could work. I have actually spend a three-day weekend DMin (OAD&D) for a group that flew me out and put me up at a motel with a suite where we played. It took me about two weeks to set up the adventure, and I lucked out. They finished it on Sunday night around eight o'clock :eek:***

***Cheers,  
Gary***

---

That is sweet. You should start a business doing that. :D So, were these guys big fans of yours or what?

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 6th November, 2002, 06:07 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Clangador*

***That is sweet. You should start a business doing that. :D So, were these guys big fans of yours or what?***

---

That would be a really demanding sort of business, amigo. I could make maybe one or two sessions a month. Figuring 1.5, that would gross something like \$4,500 a month, a good enough income for fun work, but difficult to maintain the creative demands.

The group that had me out to DM for them were indeed big fans, all with successful careers, and they spread the cost over eight persons, as I recall the group size. Thus they satisfied a dream they had held from the late 1970s, and we all had a great time in the process ;) Don't think I could manage doing that on a regular basis, though.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

RSKennan

Wednesday, 6th November, 2002, 06:16 PM

If not a documentary, would you play yourself in a low budget movie? The scenario with the eight friends sounds like the makings of a good movie. It would of course, be about more than D&D, like that movie they made a few years back about the Star Trek fans who befriended William Shatner. Please Gary, let me know if this line of discussion is annoying you, I don't want to do that.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 7th November, 2002, 04:54 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by RSKennan*

***If not a documentary, would you play yourself in a low budget movie? The scenario with the eight friends sounds like the makings of a good movie. It would of course, be about more than D&D, like that movie they made a few years back about the Star Trek fans who befriended William Shatner. Please Gary, let me know if this line of discussion is annoying you, I don't want to do that.***

---

Can't say about participating in any such production without knowing details, seeing a script ;) I am not exactly taken by the idea of playing myself, I confess.

Cheers,

## ranix65

Thursday, 7th November, 2002, 05:12 PM

Actually, that's very funny somebody should ask about a low-budget movie, I'm writing one, called Lord of the Haze, basically a retelling of the LoTR Trilogy, but set in New Jersey, and if it ever gets picked up, I wanted to try to get Gary Gygax to cameo as a Dwarf Lord(alongside Kevin Smith and either my tatoo artist Turin or my friend Christina).

How about it Gary, if I ever get it made, wanna play a dwarf lord?

## Flexor the Mighty!

Thursday, 7th November, 2002, 05:14 PM

Gary!

What did you intend the main religion of Veluna to be? Rao or Cuthbert. I always thought it was Cuthbert, but in the new books it's listed as Rao. I've been running it as a bastion of the faithfull of Cuthbert myself.

I was reading a chat transcript you did a while back. You were discussing Tsojcanth and how he imprisoned the Avatar of Tharizdun years back. You said that he was a mage of great power, of which one is only born every few hundred years. Is that how Mordenkainen would be described. And epic mage of the sort that in only seen once in a lifetime?

## alsih2o

Thursday, 7th November, 2002, 05:21 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***I an not exactly taken by the idea od playing myself, I confess.***

fanboy question of the week, in the movie based on the creation of the game (yeah, right!) who would you have play you?

## Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 7th November, 2002, 05:33 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by ranix65*

***How about it Gary, if I ever get it made, wanna play a dwarf lord?***

Heh, and why not? Of course I'd want to mug the camera like the guy in the D&D movie did :eek:

Gary



## Q&amp;A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Page 29 of 36   First   ...   19   20   21   22   23   24   25   26   27   28   29   30   31   32   33   34   35   36   Last

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 7th November, 2002, 05:39 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Flexor the Mighty!*  
**Gary!**

**What did you intend the main religion of Veluna to be? Rao or Cuthbert. I always thought it was Cuthbert, but in the new books it's listed as Rao. I've been running it as a bastion of the faithful of Cuthbert myself.**

**I was reading a chat transcript you did a while back. You were discussing Tsojcanth and how he imprisoned the Avatar of Tharizdun years back. You said that he was a mage of great power, of which one is only born every few hundred years. Is that how Mordenkainen would be described. And epic mage of the sort that is only seen once in a lifetime?**

Damn, but that's stretching my memory, as it's been a long time since I had any PCS involved in Veluna--other than passing through. As I recall, though, the Archcleric was meant to be one honoring Rao, but with St. Cuthbert as the common patron of the state. That is, general service of the masses is to the Good Cuthbert.

As for Mordie, no such pretensions;) He adventured a lot, made a substantial level, and then got involved in politics.

Cheers,  
Gary

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 7th November, 2002, 05:45 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by alsih2o*

**fanboy question of the week, in the movie based on the creation of the game (yeah, right!) who would you have play you?**

There's a question I can't readily answer--mainly because I've never considered such a film. Whoever could pull off the role of a risk-taking, Camel-straight-smoking, non-conformist who loved gaming but wasn't averse to hanging out in a biker bar maybe...

Heh,  
Gary

alsih2o

Thursday, 7th November, 2002, 05:47 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**There's a question I can't readily answer--mainly because I've never considered such a film. Whoever could pull off the role of a risk-taking, Camel-straight-smoking, non-conformist who loved gaming but wasn't averse to hanging out in a biker bar maybe...**

so, basically you are asking for Ving Rhames? :p

ColonelHardisson

Thursday, 7th November, 2002, 09:24 PM

Gary, do you have any thoughts on Steve Jackson Games and GURPS? I ask this, because one of the items of contention you have, according to the recent extensive interview done with you, is that d20 was intended as "one system to rule them all." Yet SJG, while producing many games, has relied almost exclusively for something like two decades on its GURPS system for its roleplaying games products. Although GURPS has never achieved the same success as D&D or, now, d20, it has been proven as a steady seller, and SJG has been one of the few game companies to survive as long as it has. Whether it handles all genres adequately is another matter. What it *has* done is prove that such a universal system has desirability amongst gamers and the capability of longevity. Does d20 rate special rancor (and I don't mean specifically your rancor; I mean in general) simply because of its success, or because it is D&D, or because so many companies have decided to go the d20 route?

Along these lines, isn't the contraction that is perceived by some simply due to all the bandwagon-jumpers finally jumping off the bandwagon, rather than due to some inherent flaw in the d20 system or the way it was produced/distributed?

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 7th November, 2002, 09:54 PM

Hi Colonel:)

Short answers.

While I appreciate the attribution, I am simply echoing others who before me have likened the D20 concept to the "one ring."

GURPS was written by Steve to serve gamers in multiple genres that appreciated his system. It was a successful idea, as you note.

The contraction in the D20 marketplace is noted from falloff of sales. There are likely several reasons this. Some publishers are not producing more material because it isn't selling. The likely reason is that the consumer audience has all the material it wants and then some, is now becoming selective in purchasing. As this time I can't make an informed estimate of whether or not the base audience is smaller, but it doesn't seem to be growing at any noticeable rate.

Some publishers are still achieving considerable success, producing steadily. This is certainly due to their material appealing to the large market for D20 material. After all, 3E has a dominating market share, eh?

Cheers,  
Gary

---

chatdemon

Thursday, 7th November, 2002, 10:01 PM

GURPS never licensed itself out with the stated purpose of moving itself into a dominant position in the industry. GURPS never claimed that the presence of other systems on the market was bad for the industry.

D&D3e/D20 *did* say these things, via Ryan Dancy (<http://www.wizards.com/dnd/article.a...md/md20020228e>), so it comes as no surprise to me that designers of competing systems may feel some resentment toward D20.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 7th November, 2002, 10:48 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by chatdemon*

***D&D3e/D20 did say these things, via Ryan Dancy, so it comes as no surprise to me that designers of competing systems may feel some resentment toward D20.***

---

I suspect that Colonel Hardisson knows about the difference you pointed out between Steve's approach with GURPs and the D20 effort...

Heh, and I don't think many game designers felt or feel resentment about that "one ring" game philosophy, knowing how independent gamers are and how varied their tastes in RPGs is. The group far more likely to take umbrage at such statements are those gamers who would be deprived of their favorite system if what Ryan Dancy asserted were somehow made true.

Cheers,  
Gary

---

ColonelHardisson

Friday, 8th November, 2002, 02:09 AM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by chatdemon*

***GURPS never licensed itself out with the stated purpose of moving itself into a dominant position in the industry. GURPS never claimed that the presence of other systems on the market was bad for the industry.***

***D&D3e/D20 did say these things, via Ryan Dancy ( <http://www.wizards.com/dnd/article.a...md/md20020228e>), so it comes as no surprise to me that designers of competing systems may feel some resentment toward D20.***

---

As Gary notes, I'm aware of the difference. But isn't that more a difference in PR than anything else? Don't you think that SJG would want GURPS to be the "one system to rule them all"? What capitalist worth his salt *doesn't* want to dominate his market to the exclusivity of all others? Just because Dancy actually voiced what is implicit in every other capitalistic venture ever conceived, does that somehow mean that no other game designer or company would not want to do exactly the same thing? As an ardent supporter of capitalism, I know I would. If Ford Motor came out and said "y'know, we don't really want to dominate the automobile market," most would think they were insane. Competition implies that the competitors wish to win, not share the victory stand with others.

---

ColonelHardisson

Friday, 8th November, 2002, 02:21 AM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***Hi Colonel:)***

***Short answers.***

***While I appreciate the attribution, I am simply echoing others who before me have likened the D20 concept to the "one ring."***

***GURPS was written by Steve to serve gamers in multiple genres that appreciated his system. It was a successful idea, as you note.***

***The contraction in the D20 marketplace is noted from falloff of sales. There are likely several reasons this. Some publishers are not***

*producing more material because it isn't selling. The likely reason is that the consumer audience has all the material it wants and then some, is now becoming selective in purchasing. As this time I can't make an informed estimate of whether or not the base audience is smaller, but it doesn't seem to be growing at any noticeable rate.*

*Some publishers are still achieving considerable success, producing steadily. This is certainly due to their material appealing to the large market for D20 material. After all, 3E has a dominating market share, eh?*

**Cheers,**  
**Gary**

---

I guess what I meant was, d20 gets a lot of heat, along the lines of what chatdemon notes, for Dancey's very straightforward outline of what he wanted to achieve. SJG, in essence, tried the same thing, to an extent (SJG didn't take the step of making the GURPS system OGL), but never was perceived as negatively as WotC has been. If SJG had achieved the same market share as 3e has, wouldn't they be perceived in as negative a way? I know it's not really an answerable question, without slipping into parallel universes, but it's something that occurred to me.

---

MerricB

Friday, 8th November, 2002, 02:42 AM

It should also be noted that Ryan also was speaking from the vantage point of *having* the dominant system.

Cheers!

---

ColonelHardisson

Friday, 8th November, 2002, 02:50 AM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by MerricB*

***It should also be noted that Ryan also was speaking from the vantage point of *having* the dominant system.***

***Cheers!***

---

Yes, that's true, but, respectfully, why did it need to be noted? He had the dominant system, but it had been all but run into the ground. He wanted to revive it and get it going again. Sure, his plan was pretty extensive, but again, what about it was different from what any capitalist would do? I mean, he isn't going to say "well, we have the dominant game system, so we're more than happy to do nothing with it to expand its growth." Again, no disrespect intended; this is in the spirit of a real discussion, not an argument.

---

rounser

Friday, 8th November, 2002, 02:51 AM

Quote:

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*If SJG had achieved the same market share as 3e has, wouldn't they be perceived in as negative a way? I know it's not really an answerable question, without slipping into parallel universes, but it's something that occurred to me.*

---

I'm no expert, but I'd say; *definitely*. A trait of human nature that I've noticed again and again over the years is that people tend to be suspicious of anything which represents power or popularity (which are often closely related anyway). I strongly suspect that this is because evolution has hardwired into our minds the emotional realisation that power corrupts, and that there's a tendency to stop peddling quite so hard once you're on top, so it's in our best interests to never be satisfied with powerful entities in order to keep them peddling, and to suspect their motivations and efforts are for the worst of the rest of us.

Therefore, I think that people don't trust the monopolies, they don't trust the mainstream, and they don't trust the powerful on an emotional level - because emotions are there to serve you when logic doesn't reflect reality or your own best interests well enough. Even when Microsoft, Britney Spears and Dubya are acting sincerely and with the best interests of others at heart, there is a tendency for the plebocites to suspect conspiracy and for neutral emotions to veer (often irrationally) towards hostility, simply because of their status as the overdog. The same sort of thing applies to WotC (their products often seem to be set to higher standards than other d20 publishers in reviews) and, of course, d20 itself.

I'd bet confidently that if SJG/GURPS were in the same position, they'd receive the same treatment.

---

ColonelHardisson

Friday, 8th November, 2002, 03:02 AM

Well, this is actually a pretty interesting discussion, but I fear it's going far off-topic, I think. That is, unless Gary wishes for it to continue. I'm sorry for hijacking the thread; I really was genuinely interested in what Gary thought about GURPS and d20, in regards to the similarity of intent for both of them.

Anyway, I'll ask Gary again, because this question keeps getting lost in the shuffle: will you be attending GenCon once it moves to Indianapolis? I remember that you were disappointed it was moving (I was too; I'd never been able to make it to GenCon, and was hoping to attend it where it began).

---

dcollins

Friday, 8th November, 2002, 02:01 PM

Gary, I've got an A/D&D question for you:

Since Jeff Grub's 1st Edition Manual of the Planes, the Elemental Planes have been depicted as infinite regions without constant gravity or a standard up/down direction. Therefore they're documented as: (a) having "subjective" gravity chosen by each separate intelligent creature -- allowing everyone to fly around all the planes freely, and (b) nonsentient objects hang stuck motionless in space, even after being shot or thrown by a creature. This trait is also given to a number of other planes which are open expanses without a "ground".

Does this match up with your vision of what the Elemental Planes should be like? Or did you historically picture them as having a fixed up/down direction for everyone (and/or even having a "bottom" at some point)?

Which brings up a closely related question: for you, what was the City of Brass (for example) supposed to be sitting on?

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 8th November, 2002, 03:13 PM

Help! Thread Hijackers At Work!!!

Just kidding about the "hijack" of course.

When Steve did GURPS I do not believe he was aiming at taking over the whole RPG field. The game system he designed was, as I said, more likely meant to capture and retain a solid share of it.

Attacking the "big guys" is most often done by those who want to compete with them or by those who are looking for publicity to "make a name," I do believe. When there is a fight, though, the onlookers do tend to root for the "little guy." As for the D20 matter, this is likely as much a matter of vocal opposition by those who plainly don't like the new D&D game than anything else. That's hardly surprising in the RPG field, where the "critics" are vocal, outspoken in their opinions. There is likely more fervor amongst those who assail it, because 3E/D20 is far and away the most played RPG. By no stretch of the imagination is it a monopoly. Furthermore, with the diversity of opinion so evident in the RPG field, it has no chance of ever becoming one.

ColonelHardisson, I am committed to attending the Milwaukee regional con that runs a week from GenCon. I have no firm plans in regards to making Indy. That is I had not planned on going, but I am getting some pressure to attend, so it's up in the air at present.

Dcollins, my vision of the elemental planes differs from that published. As for the City of Brass, I had it floatiing on fiery stuff of airy sort, a sort of island in a sea of flames, if you will.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

dcollins

Friday, 8th November, 2002, 03:48 PM

Re: Help! Thread Hijackers At Work!!!

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***Dcollins, my vision of the elemental planes differs from that published. As for the City of Brass, I had it floatiing on fiery stuff of airy sort, a sort of island in a sea of flames, if you will.***

---

Interesting. So I'm assuming that the whole plane did have a fixed orientation of gravity, and not the "everyone flies for free" mechanism?

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 8th November, 2002, 04:06 PM

Re: Re: Help! Thread Hijackers At Work!!!

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by dcollins*

***Interesting. So I'm assuming that the whole plane did have a fixed orientation of gravity, and not the "everyone flies for free" mechanism?***

---

A correct assumption indeed ;) Otherwise, what use the power of flight possessed by efreet or flying carpets for that matter, the latter being a favorite means of reaching the fabled city, of course.

Ciao,  
Gary

---

dcollins

Friday, 8th November, 2002, 06:39 PM

Re: Re: Re: Help! Thread Hijackers At Work!!!

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***A correct assumption indeed ;) Otherwise, what use the power of flight possessed by efreet or flying carpets for that matter, the latter being a favorite means of reaching the fabled city, of course.***

---

I agree. Thanks for the reply!

---

Caedrel

Friday, 8th November, 2002, 07:46 PM

What's the record for a thread?

'cause I think this thread has a shot at the longevity record, although I suppose there are others who are longer or have more posts (the controversial ones about religion etc etc :))

It sounds like you're eternally busy Gary, so it's just as well that it's with things that you really enjoy doing :) A few things...

Paraphrase: L *Aalso has a d30 and a d7*

Woo! I suppose the d30 is very handy for generating a day of the month? It must be even more spherical than the d20 - which could lead to even greater erosion problems with ongoing use :) My very earliest set of dice came with the Basic D&D box, and the corners of the d20 are a bit smooth, although it hasn't yet led to any disputes about what the number for any given roll \*really\* is :) I can't even imagine what shape a d7 is...

are its faces triangles?

Do you have a favourite set of dice, that you would use all the time if you could and/or carry around with you wherever you go? Or have you been happy to use whatever dice happen to be around / provided by the Convention organisers? Or both, as the occasion warrants?

Summation: *Some of the things that went on at TSR*

It sounds like not only poor management of a game company on their part, but poor management overall. I think escorting people off the premises is a lousy way to do business, and only ever hurts a company in the long run. You should always be able to talk to people and figure something out (even if it is only recognising your "irreconcilable differences" and agreeing to part ways) if not amicably then at least civilly.

I couldn't help be struck by the parallels between this real life situation and one portrayed in "the Kinghts of the Dinner Table". I know you don't have a chance to review stuff explicitly, but have you ever read any of the comics? Do any episodes stand out to you, or made you say "Wow! That's almost exactly like my group" or "That's so close to what happened that it's almost painful"?

u o r d o f t h e 3 i l g s

I know your schedule is pretty full, but I suspect every gamer in the world has seen the first Lord of the Rings movie... if so, did you have an opinion on it? Was there anything you particularly liked, or particularly disliked? I really enjoyed the whole experience, especially the fights in the mines of Moria, and am looking forward to the Two Towers immensely.

---

## King\_Stannis

Friday, 8th November, 2002, 09:00 PM

Hello Gary!

Thanks a million for sticking around and answering all of our questions. I have a couple for you. First, have you seen that witch Lorraine Williams in the years since your departure from TSR? If so, did you tell her off? The only reason I bring it up is that you mentioned earlier that you occasionally see one of the Blume's, (Brian?), and that he runs away with "great alacrity" whenever he sees you. I found that hilarious!

Also, are you aware that there is a new Conan movie in the making, "Conan: Crown of Iron". Supposedly Arnold has already been signed for it. I know that you were no fan of the original, but do you think you might give this one a try?

Finally, have you ever done any "microarmour" wargaming. If so, what are your favorite periods – modern or WWII?

▼ Page 29 of 36   ◀◀ First   ◀ ...   19   20   21   22   23   24   25   26   27   28   29   30   31   32   33   34   35   36   ▶   Last ▶▶   [Show 20 post\(s\) from this thread on one page](#)

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## Q&A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Page 30 of 36   ◀ First   ...   20   21   22   23   24   25   26   27   28   29   36   31   32   33   34   35   36   ▶ Last ▶▶

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 8th November, 2002, 09:32 PM

Re: What's the record for a thread?

Caedrel, Hi:)

This thread is on the longish side, isn't it? As you note, I do enjoy reading posts and responding. I have about 600 on the main LA game website, but it seems that here on the EN borads is going to be my most active place for a while longer...

The Lejendary Adventure game makes limited rules use of the d30 in combat, some of the nasty monsters having it as the base die. I use the d7 personally, and it is not a required die for the system.

The d30 does tend to roll a long time unless you have a bounded place to toss it. The d7 is a pentagon, the points and sides having numbers. As I think I stated, it seems to generate all seven numbers pretty equally when rolled.

While I am not much of a collector or picky about dice, there are a couple of d20s and d10s that I like to use best because they seem to generate the numbers I want as the GM more often;) In truth, though, I'm generally satisfied with whatever dice are at hand.

Management at TSR tended to be very much on the "poor" side, yes. Not only were discharged employees escorted out, but at one point Kevin was going to use his "medical training" to examine employees for drug use and fire them if he found they were using. Luckily, he was talked out of that scheme. When one of their relatives was discharged for lack of capacity, though, she was allowed plenty of time before having to leave, and then during the audit it was found that the company was paying for her college tuition...

As for KoDT, I do read it now and then. A very funny comic that!

the first Lord of the Rings movie Was very good indeed. I was bored in the opening--too long for my tastes, and I disliked the flute music and chanting when the elves were around. That seemed inappropriate to me. I liked all the rest, and the orcs wer great, especially the chief of the bunch. My wife picked the movie up on CD, so I've seen it after the big screen outing, and my son Alex has watched it about a half-dozen times now.

I've seen the "Harry Potter" film twice also. With the LotR movie, that makes the two best fantasy films done to date. I too am looking forward to seeing "Two Towers" as well the next "Henry Potter" flick.

Cheers,  
Gary

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 8th November, 2002, 09:44 PM

Hi Todd!

Welcome, and at the risk of wearing it out, I really do have some fun on boards:)

No, I haven't seen Lorraine Williams since the court case was settled. I think she is living out in California now, in Carmel by the Sea yet...

It is really pretty sad that Brian behaves as he does, for once we were at least close and friendly associates, almost buddies. I suppose it is his conscience that makes him behave as he does--or maybe he does think I'll give him a sound thrashing given the opportunity...heh.

Ah well, as a fan of REH's work since I was about 10 years old, I'll have to see the next "Conan" film even though I'll likely really not like it. I told Arthur Lieberman and Mimu Shapiro both that they needed an expert consultant on the "Conan" written by Howard, and Art then wanted me to design a weapon for "King Kull" to use and suggest a storyline for that flick...for free :rolleyes: Anyway, I like Arnie in many films, but not as Conan. Tough luck for me.

I never got into much microarmor play, always preferred HO scale. I've played more contemporary games, but WWII armor amongst my very favorite periods in miniatures and board wargames too.

Cheers,  
Gary

pogre

Wednesday, 13th November, 2002, 07:08 AM

Hello Gary,

[insert gushing, thanks, etc. here]

Do you still use mass combats in your fantasy campaigns? What rules set? The real Chainmail perhaps?

One other thing - it seems like the genesis of roleplaying was in the midwest. First there was yourself and Dave Arneson, then the folks down here (Bloomington) at GDW with Traveller, and the guys over in Decatur (Judges' Guild). Any theory why this is so?

Frank Chadwick once told me it was because the midwest is boring and so we have better imaginations to make up for it.

Quote:

*Originally posted by pogre*  
**Hello Gary,**

***One other thing - it seems like the genesis of roleplaying was in the midwest. First there was yourself and Dave Arneson, then the folks down here (Bloomington) at GDW with Traveller, and the guys over in Decatur (Judges' Guild). Any theory why this is so?***

***Frank Chadwick once told me it was because the midwest is boring and so we have better imaginations to make up for it.***

I asked roughly the same question earlier in the thread. Look in the first 4 pages or so. Gary posted an answer.

As I added earlier, I'd like to mention that Chicago was also the home of *Weird Tales*, the fantasy pulp magazine where Robert Howard and others published their works, in the 30s. So the midwest has long been a hotbed for fantasy.

EDIT: Found it: page #3

---

## Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 13th November, 2002, 02:16 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by pogre*  
**Hello Gary,**

***[insert gushing, thanks, etc. here]***

***Do you still use mass combats in your fantasy campaigns? What rules set? The real Chainmail perhaps?***

***One other thing - it seems like the genesis of roleplaying was in the midwest. First there was yourself and Dave Arneson, then the folks down here (Bloomington) at GDW with Traveller, and the guys over in Decatur (Judges' Guild). Any theory why this is so?***

***Frank Chadwick once told me it was because the midwest is boring and so we have better imaginations to make up for it.***

[Insert usual cordial responses to thanks:]

Lacking a large playing space these days, when we get into large-scale combat dice are used to indicate positions, and I have a "quick & dirty" method of resolution of fighting (based on the LA game system) in which there are no player personas involved. this allows such combats to not eat up too much of the game session.

Actually, back in the 1960s, while there was a large Midwestern contingent of wargamers, the East and West Coasts, Texas too, were well represented. Perhaps because of the GenCon event being here in Wisconsin, and a lot of activity in the surrounding area playing, and what good old Frank Chadwick pointed out, there was more fervor for gaming here than in milder climes. I know my most productive time of year is usually from November through April ;)

Cheers,  
Gary

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## Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 13th November, 2002, 02:19 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by johnsemlak*

***As I added earlier, I'd like to mention that Chicago was also the home of Weird Tales, the fantasy pulp magazine where Robert Howard and others published their works, in the 30s. So the midwest has long been a hotbed for fantasy.***

And now Wisconsin is home to Arkham Press.

The Midwest was also big on spiritualism back in the early 20th century. Wonder what all that indicates... Boredom springs to mind :D

Cheers,  
Gary

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## Endur

Thursday, 14th November, 2002, 05:25 AM

Question regarding boxed D&D

Gary,

Although I've read most of your 1e products, my favorite remains the boxed set my parents bought me in 1980. With the Blue cover and the Dragon facing off against the Wizard and the Warrior. And B2, my favorite module, the Keep on the Borderlands.

My question: In the Blue rules book, on page 39, there is a cross section of Stone Mountain with a great Stone Skull showing levels one through seven. And then on pages 40+ you have a sample floor plan for the first level of the dungeon.



My question: Was this sample dungeon ever fully fleshed out? Or was it left as just starter materials for the imagination of those who would be using the product?

Tom

---

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 14th November, 2002, 01:55 PM

Re: Question regarding boxed D&D

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Endur  
Gary,*

*[snip]*

*My question: Was this sample dungeon ever fully fleshed out? Or was it left as just starter materials for the imagination of those who would be using the product?*

*Tom*

---

thanks for the good words, Endur:)

Your latter surmise is correct. The dungeon was never fleshed out as a product, just shown as an example. Now that you mention it, I wonder why we never did make it into a product, as it would have had a ready and waiting audience.

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 14th November, 2002, 10:25 PM

LA MMPO RPG Website Just Online

Greetings All!

In case anyone wants to see what the LA game is all about in its online, MMP version, I've just learned that the special website for it is now officially open. Come on by, take a gander, and join the group there if it looks like fun:)

[www.LejendaryAdventure.com](http://www.LejendaryAdventure.com)

Regards,  
Gary

---

Caedrel

Friday, 15th November, 2002, 09:03 PM

Movies

*the first Lord of the Rings movie Was very good indeed. I was bored in the opening--too long for my tastes, and I disliked the flute music and chanting when the elves were around.*

If you get around to seeing the extended version on DVD, let us know what you think - apparently it's got better character development but not onerously so. If you found the opening slow, I wonder if you'll find the extended version slower? :)

*I've seen the "Harry Potter" film twice also. With the LotR movie, that makes the two best fantasy films done to date.*

Uh oh! I feel a "best movie of all time" debate coming on - perhaps a sure way to generate some controversy and get this thread closed :)

My personal favourite would be Ladyhawke from 1982 (I think). But that probably has more to do with me than the movie, as I suspect most "personal favourites" are :)

I loved the Harry Potter books, especially "the Prisoner of Azkaban", but was a little disappointed with the more kids' oriented tone of the first movie. I understand why they did it and all, but one of the things that drew me into the books was the dark menace of Voldermort. It was probably a bit too hard to convey that in a movie format to the target audience: how many regular movie-goers would appreciate the significance of something that kills and drinks unicorn blood to survive?

I understand that JK Rowling has a bit of writers' block and is having trouble delivering the next book - aaahhhh! I hope she isn't run over by a bus or something before she finishes the series. Not that I want anyone to be run over by a bus! ;)

I suppose I'd better ask a question too, while I'm here :) I know you enjoy watching your team in the NFL (I forget which - sorry, it was a lot of pages ago! :)), but do you have a favourite sport to take part in? Were you a mean basketball player, or bowler, or were you never really interested in the physical stuff, with all this wonderful material coming out of your mind? :)

Cheers,  
Caedrel

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 15th November, 2002, 10:15 PM

Re: Movies

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Caedrel*



*If you get around to seeing the extended version on DVD, let us know what you think - apparently it's got better character development but not onerously so. If you found the opening slow, I wonder if you'll find the extended version slower? :)*

---

Actually, we have the DVD, and I've watched it once, son Alex several times. I found it less tedious, in fact in that I could get up, get a drink, have a smoke, when the material on screen was not quite compelling to me :)

Quote:

*Uh oh! I feel a "best movie of all time" debate coming on - perhaps a sure way to generate some controversy and get this thread closed :)*

---

I liked the "Harry Potter film a bit better, but not by much, so I have no dispute with those who rate the first of the "Rings Trilogy" movies above it. We are looking forward to seeing the second productions in both series soon now, in fact.

Quote:

*My personal favourite would be Ladyhawke from 1982 (I think). But that probably has more to do with me than the movie, as I suspect most "personal favourites" are :)*

---

That was done in the days when I was out in the "Hollywood" area, and I read, still have, a pre-production script. I had great hopes for that film, but in my judgement, they blew it somewhere. The original script was a lot better than what was shot.

Quote:

*[snip]*

*I suppose I'd better ask a question too, while I'm here :) I know you enjoy watching your team in the NFL (I forget which - sorry, it was a lot of pages ago! :)), but do you have a favourite sport to take part in? Were you a mean basketball player, or bowler, or were you never really interested in the physical stuff, with all this wonderful material coming out of your mind? :)*

*Cheers,  
Caedrel*

---

Da Bears! They are not playing well at all, but luckily I am not so much a fan as I can't enjoy watching them lose and at the same time have fun watching the Green Bay Packers play well and win. Of course come Monday night I'll be rooting for the Bears, but likely they'll lose:( Also likely that the Packers will be in the Superbowl if they play as well as they have been.

I played football in elementary school, loved being in the line, but by the time high school rolled around I was far too independent in mind and spirit for either school or organized sports. For exercise I worked on a farm, hiked, camped, fished, and hunted, doing a bit of weight lifting to tone the muscles, and then worked as a mover for a bit.

The thought of all that exercise now is enough to send me for the refrigerator for a beer :D

Cheers,  
Gary

---

EricNoah

Friday, 15th November, 2002, 10:23 PM

Hey, Gary, good to see you alive. :) We had one of the (fairly frequent) "Gygax is Dead" scares this morning...

---

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 15th November, 2002, 10:37 PM

Greatly Exaggerated...

Quote:

*Originally posted by EricNoah*

*Hey, Gary, good to see you alive. :) We had one of the (fairly frequent) "Gygax is Dead" scares this morning...*

---

Well, while one day the news will be true, whomever posted the tale of my demise was yanking cranks. Another silly buger looking for 15 seconds of fame :D

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Melan

Saturday, 16th November, 2002, 12:03 AM

Besides, we haven't seen those Castle Ruins yet...

Sorry. :)

---

johnsemlak

Saturday, 16th November, 2002, 08:44 AM

Gary

I read somewhere that you said you created LA to create a rules-light FRPG because you thought the rules-heavy 3e/d20 version would scare

away many gamers and make D&D and FRPGs less popular. YOU wanted to create a game that would continue to attract new gamers to the FRPG genre (correct me if you haven't said something like that).

On the other hand, I would imagine than many people interested in or playing LA are veteran gamers who either are fans of your earlier works (like me :) ) or veterans who simply don't like 3e's rules-heavy system and see LA as a fix for that. (again, please correct me if my assessment is not correct).

What kind of gamers are you trying to attract and how, if I may ask (unfortunately except for the Trolllord games site and the Dragonsfoot site, I don't see much press for LA)?

BTW, the LA rulebooks are on me 'to-buy' list.

John

---

Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 16th November, 2002, 03:54 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Melan*

**Besides, we haven't seen those Castle Ruins yet...**

---

**Sorry. ;)**

---

Heh, and we are working on that, as I just posted over on the PPP boards earlier this AM ;)

Just don't expect the secrets of the Disappearing Jeweled Man and the Great Stone Face to ever be revealed in actuality :eek: I plan to provide a set of options for the DM that may or may not include the way those were dealt with originally.

LOL,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 16th November, 2002, 04:04 PM

Hi John!

As with most rumors pertaining to me, those of my prescience are quite exaggerated.

Fact is I began working on the LA RPG system in 1996, using a CRPG system I'd created for a game that was optioned and then didn't make production because the house that had accepted it was sold off. Anyway, it came from that base and was in testing well before the new D&D game was conceived. As I recall, John Ratliff played in a GenCon alpha-test game in 1998.

Fact is that I found I liked a skill based system better than a class based one for several reasons, not the least of which was the potential for multi-genre development. Also, rules-light facilitates both faster play with more flexibility and innovation possible for designers, GMs and players alike, as well for ease of adapting the system to suit other genres.

As a matter of fact, I did assume that most persons picking up the La game would be veterans--and thus the effort to change terminology so as to force mindset change to more easily understand and assimilate the new system, for it is very different from the D&D one.

Hope that covers it:)

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 16th November, 2002, 04:07 PM

BTW...

Do I get an award from the Department of Redundancy Department for the previous post. Fact is I sort of got carried away with the facts in factually replying :rolleyes:

Heh,  
Gary

---

johnsemlak

Saturday, 16th November, 2002, 04:41 PM

Gary

Sorry for spreading misinformation. Your post does clear things up.

As I remember, your move away from a class based system also manifested in Dangerous Journeys, right?

---

Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 16th November, 2002, 05:01 PM

Hi John,

No need for concern, as many a misunderstanding occurs on the internet ;)

Right you are, I did make my first foray into a skill-based system with the DJ game. There I attempted detail, although the system was optional in regards to the amount, so in some ways it was a "pick-a-rules" system. It was very rules heavy if all presented were used, but many of the rules

were easily dropped to move the game towards the rules-light end. The major exceptions were the creation of the character and use of magic. The DJ system was also designed for multi-genra application, and it worked well for all who loved detailed character development and much player involvement in the operation of the game.

Now I favor that involvement in play, not management, if you will.

Cheers,  
Gary

PA

Sunday, 22nd December, 2002, 01:22 AM

Quote:

*Originally posted by JohnRTroy*

**In all seriousness, I felt the Multiverse, the Planes and Spheres interpretation by others at TSR after you left, quite frankly, sucked.**

Beware, there are many a Planescape fan around. :)

PA

Sunday, 22nd December, 2002, 01:25 AM

Re: Greatly Exaggerated...

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**Well, while one day the news will be true, whomever posted the tale of my demise was yanking cranks. Another silly buger looking for 15 seconds of fame :D**

Ridiculous. But such annoyance can easily be thwarted: when you die for real, simply agree to post an official warning on those boards. Problem solved!

PA

Sunday, 22nd December, 2002, 01:26 AM

ROTK

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**I liked the "Harry Potter film a bit better, but not by much, so I have no dispute with those who rate the first of the "Rings Trilogy" movies above it. We are looking forward to seeing the second productions in both series soon now, in fact.**

So?

PA

Sunday, 22nd December, 2002, 01:27 AM

Priceless

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**My belief is that the rules for an RPG should facilitate the enjoyment of the game for all concerned. If they get in the way then they are no good.**

Eh eh. Back to our little diceless discussion, then. (Yeah, I'll kill you with this one.) You may remember that I once said that I thought the diceless system designed by Erick Wujcik was perfect for Amber, if I would not use it for any other universe I can think of. I was not very good at explaining WHY, though, but I've since then discovered that **Stefon Mears** did it pretty well:

Quote:

## **Why Amber Should be Played Diceless**

*A roleplaying game, distilled to its essence, can be divided into two parts: story and mechanics. The story portion includes elements such as background, setting, character personality and so forth. The mechanics element forms the framework needed to make consistent the attributes possessed by the gameworld and its inhabitants and to regulate their interaction.*

*It may be a story element that a character is a world-class pool player, but it is the mechanics element that determines exactly how good a pool player he is and how well he plays in any given tournament.*

*There is a trend today in gaming to place as much emphasis as possible on the story element at the expense of the mechanics. I suspect that this is in response to an earlier trend to emphasize mechanics over story. I feel that both paths are flawed.*

*To emphasize mechanics over story is to lose oneself in a sea of number-crunching and page-turning. Creativity gives way to accountancy and the game becomes stilted and lifeless. After all, no matter how detailed the system, the numbers only ever tell half the story.*

*But to engage in the obverse is to invite a host of other problems. A roleplaying game is not a novel, a play or a movie. It has no script. It has no*

ultimate author. There are those who would say that the Game Master is the ultimate author. If this is true than the players are merely effects and are ultimately only present to write dialog for the Game Master's protagonists and perhaps to appreciate her storytelling skill. If this is what they enjoy, then let them have at it.

I prefer a game in which the players work with the Game Master to create the story. The Game Master will have her plots, but they are flexible in the face of the actions of the players. For this, or even a semblance of it to be true, the mechanics must be clear to all involved. The mechanics help both the Game Master and the players understand how the world works and the place of the characters in it.

To continue the example of the pool player, saying that he is "world class" is good. Understanding that in the HERO system he has the skill Professional Skill: Pool Player 17- tells you that indeed, they don't come much better than he is. Knowing that in FUDGE he has the skill Superb Pool Player gives you roughly the same information.

The Game Master can put this into clearer perspective by providing skill levels of known players. For example, she might arbitrarily declare that the top ten players in the world currently are Superb, while the other four mainstays are Great. She might even provide an example of greater skill, perhaps saying that Willie Mosconi was Legendary.

The mechanics work together with the story elements to form a cohesive whole. This is a concept that should be kept in mind in any roleplaying game, but becomes especially important when adapting outside source material, such as that of a series of movies or novels, to a game. Creating the feel of the source material's universe is critical.

Many people, however, assume that this is handled on the storytelling end and treat the mechanics as an afterthought. This is a mistake. While it is true that the Game Master must use the story elements to create the proper atmosphere, problems with the game mechanics can blow that feel quickly.

For example, say the Game Master has seen every episode of Buffy the Vampire Slayer more than once. She's spent large amounts of time going over her non-player characters, local history, character backgrounds and making all the nuances fit. She may even go so far as to plot her games like episodes from the show, complete with introductions and tags.

If this Game Master, who has worked so lovingly to craft her game, then runs it using the Storyteller system it will crash and burn. Why? The mechanics of the system will not properly represent the world as represented in the series. The werewolves won't work: Buffyverse werewolves are aggressive animals in wolf form with no apparent intelligence or personality, not fierce warrior-shamans with multiple forms and various tribal and lunar affiliations. Vampires won't work for similar reasons. Can they be made to work? Probably, if sufficient effort is put into the mechanics to iron out the differences. This would require a number of modifications before you could begin to have a good translation though.

It is this reflection of the setting in the game mechanics that makes Amber a difficult setting to run. Almost any world you can name is in shadow, and most if not all the PCs will have power over shadow. This, however, can be addressed by sufficiently raising the power level of the chosen system.

The real problem with running Amber is a subtle one, but one that is reflected completely throughout all ten books, plus at least four of the short stories (as of this writing there are two I have not read). Those with power over shadow, and in this I include both Amberites and Chaosites, are immune to the vagaries of random chance. In general they have the power to cause chance to favor them, but even without active effort they succeed or fail based entirely on ability combined with planning (their own and that of others).

Consider the following examples:

Bleys fights his way up Kolvir. He seems to have been caught accidentally and pulled over the side. It is later stated that Bleys was escaping, abandoning Corwin to Eric's wrath. The implication there is that Bleys had a means of escape even without Corwin's trumps. This makes sense, since we know that at the very least, Bleys had a set of his own. Of course, Bleys is a sorcerer and Corwin didn't understand why he threw Bleys his trumps — it is not unreasonable to suppose that Bleys had lain a spell on Corwin that was triggered by his "accident."

Corwin fights a tremendous pitched battle at sea and later fighting his way up Kolvir. He takes wounds, but no one scores a critical hit.

There are plenty more such examples scattered throughout the series. Now the argument can be made that these were plot devices, the same as are used in all novels. In Amber, though, there is a difference. In Amber, nothing happens at random. From Corwin's coming across the wounded Lance in a shadow like his Avalon to Merlin's being "rescued" by Vinta Bayle, Zelazny seemed to go out of his way to insure that everything that just looked like random chance was in fact connected back to someone's plans. In battle, no one ever lands a lucky shot - their strategy, ability and pure force of will either prove to be enough or they don't.

In a game with dice, eventually, someone will succeed or fail purely on the basis of a particularly good or bad roll. For most games that's fine; for Amber that's just the sort of thing that can lead to ruining the feel of the game. Imagine a training session in Castle Amber. A young Amberite is fencing with Benedict. A good roll for the player and a bad roll for the game master and the young Amberite scores a hit. On Benedict. Let me repeat that: one good roll for the player and one bad roll for the game master and the young Amberite scores a hit on Benedict.

Now most people would not make you roll for a training-session duel. So, worse, let us assume that was an actual, formal duel. Now, instead of a lucky hit in a training session, functionally impossible to begin with, we now have a young Amberite scoring a hit on Benedict when it means something. This is not Benedict's fight with Corwin by the Black Road, where Corwin, "the second-best swordsman around," got the edge on Benedict only by having and using well his superior knowledge of the terrain to pull a trick. This is a formal duel in Castle Amber, where the terrain is neutral and both combatants are rested and ready. In other words, these are ideal circumstances, yet the dice still provide the chance that the young Amberite might have a prayer of harming Benedict.

Now consider that the dice provide that chance to some duelist out of shadow who is not even the equal of our young Amberite. This would blow the feel of the game faster than almost anything else that can happen.

But that holds true for the elder Amberites, who in almost all cases would be NPCs. They can, of course, be handled by GM fiat and thus remove the possibility of anyone disturbing the flow of the game that way. What about the younger Amberites, the main characters of Merlin's Saga: Merlin, Luke, Jurt, Martin, Coral and so forth? They are of the same age, roughly, that player characters would be, and are thus on about the same scale. They are also every bit as immune as their predecessors to the random factors that influence the lives of those who are native to shadow.

Jurt fails at many things not because he is unlucky but because he is clumsy and does not plan. Whether he is attempting to kill Merlin, crossing an icy plateau, shadowmastering a way in his closet or stealing a sword, he does not consider the ramifications of his actions, only the prospect of immediate gratification.

Luke plans, trains and studies to excess and succeeds at practically everything he tries. He even manages to kill Caine, an elder Amberite. The only person who continually gets the better of him is his mother, an adept schemer herself who has been tampering with his life so long that she

is sure to know where his blind spots are.

Merlin's entire life is an excellent example of how plot and counter-plot can appear random. Was his birth the natural conclusion of the blossoming affection of Dara for Corwin? No, it was a calculated (on her part) breeding project to produce a fit king of Chaos. Merlin assumed that his April 30th assassin was a random shadow psychopath, but the whole series of attempts was part of an intricate vengeance plot. Were they foiled by random good luck as he suspected of more than one occurrence? No, they were foiled either by his best friend or his guardian demon, as appropriate. The list just goes on from there. In fact, Zelazny uses Merlin's assumption of luck and accident at times to demonstrate his naïveté.

To use mechanics for an Amber game that rely on a random factor like dice is to damage the feel of the setting and thus make for an inferior gaming experience.

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I'm aware, however, that there are those who feel more comfortable having some sort of random factor involved in their games. For those of you unwilling or unable to attempt it, or who find that diceless simply doesn't work well with your group, I will soon present a few alternatives.

Those of you who wish to share their views on the subject, of course, may contact me.

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<http://home.earthlink.net/~fintach/Amber.html>

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ColonelHardisson

Sunday, 22nd December, 2002, 01:59 AM

Re: Priceless

Quote:

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*Originally posted by PA*

***Eh eh. Back to our little diceless discussion, then. (Yeah, I'll kill you with this one.) You may remember that I once said that I thought the diceless system designed by Erick Wujcik was perfect for Amber, if I would not use it for any other universe I can think of. I was not very good at explaining WHY, though, but I've since then discovered that Stefon Mears did it pretty well:***

---

That's an interesting essay, but it simply shows the total subjectivity of reading. Basically, that essay could apply to just about any work of fiction one could imagine being used as the basis for a RPG - with a bit of adjustment, given all the specific examples from the Amber series.

Many readers will simply be unable to countenance the possibility that any of the major characters in their beloved books can be beaten - Conan is an example for me. The idea that any character in a RPG, PC or NPC, would have the chance to even come close to killing Conan seems ridiculous to me. However, a way to look at it is like this - the campaign is the PCs' "novel." They are the protagonists. Every other character, no matter who it is, is of secondary importance, at best, to the PCs. Thus, the invulnerable sheen of characters from books is lost while they are in the campaign. Oh, it's still gonna be mighty unlikely that anyone is gonna get a killing crit in on Conan, but the possibility is there. If I'm DMing, and I bring in a literary character as a NPC, even Conan, I'm not going to make him simply invulnerable. If I did, then it would feel too much like I was railroaded the plot along, and the PCs were just along to sightsee through my campaign. I know that, as a player, I'd get frustrated if I found out that there were NPCs - or even PCs - that simply couldn't be touched, not just by me, but by anyone/thing else. A good chunk of the fun of RPGing is the possibility that my PC can get killed. Finding out that other PCs or NPCs can't be beaten takes away from that for me.

I understand that much of the essay concerns how the Amber diceless game is devised so that the major characters from the books aren't gonna get beat at whatever it is they're the best at. I understand that reasoning, and that's why the Amber RPG is still an interesting experiment in the RPG industry. I can totally understand why people like to play it. But, I always assumed that whoever it was that was best at, say, sword-fighting (it's been years since I last read the books), got that good by way of risking his life time after time, and by the time we see him in the books, he's already spent maybe millennia perfecting his art. He's not invulnerable, but he seems like it to the ordinary - and not-so-ordinary - person.

I guess another example is the characters from H.P. Lovecraft's books. They are pretty much the opposite of the Amber characters - they die pretty easily. That's why many think that stats for Cthulhu (for example) are ridiculous - he would be impossible to kill. I never saw it like that. Lovecraft's protagonists were almost painfully ordinary. Maybe a bit more courage in some cases. So the big baddies would seem totally unknowable and invincible to them. But to a RPG PC, that may not be the case. Sure, Cthulhu is still gonna kill just about any PC, but there is a chance - because the campaign is the PCs' story, and RPG PCs aren't the ordinary humans Lovecraft used as protagonists. The same reasoning goes for Amber.

I'm not really disagreeing with anything, not in vehement way. I understand what was discussed in the essay. I just thought I'd address it from a different perspective. If you want to game diceless, that's cool. For me, personally, Amber's system doesn't quite work, for the reasons I detail above.

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PA

Sunday, 22nd December, 2002, 02:26 AM

Re: Re: Priceless

Quote:

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*Originally posted by ColonelHardisson*

***I understand that much of the essay concerns how the Amber diceless game is devised so that the major characters from the books aren't gonna get beat at whatever it is they're the best at.***

---

Er, no. That's not the point. Read the example about Corwin beating Benedict, who is a better swordsman. The point is about chance happenings having little to do with the Amberite universe: everything seems planned, and even winning a single duel is more a matter of wits (or,

as one would put it, treachery) than chance. The point is that, at their level, Amberites don't let much room to chance. If you want to consider them under the d20 system, then think of *very high level* characters: if your BAB is 40, the chance factor represented by rolling a d20 is much less much significant (+50% max) than than for a newbie with a BAB of 1 (between 100% and 2000%).

When Corwin faces Benedict, he knows he cannot win if he fights fair. When he fights Eric and begins to beat him, he doesn't think "hey, I'm lucky today!" but realizes that either Eric has grown complacent, or himself has improved more than he thought, or even just more confident (more Good Stuff, in Amber DRPG terms, which also determines "luck").

[edit:] "in Amber DRPG terms" and not "in Amber terms."

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ColonelHardisson

Sunday, 22nd December, 2002, 02:38 AM

Re: Re: Re: Priceless

Quote:

*Originally posted by PA*

***Er, no. That's not the point. Read the example about Corwin beating Benedict, who is a better swordsman. The point is about chance happenings having little to do with the Amberite universe: everything seems planed, and even winning a single duel is more a matter of wits (or, as one would put it, treachery) than chance. The point is that, at their level, Amberites don't let much room to chance. If you want to consider them under the d20 system, then think of very high level characters: if your BAB is 40, the chance factor represented by rolling a d20 is much less much significant (+50% max) than than for a newbie with a BAB of 1 (between 100% and 2000%).***

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***[edit:] "in Amber DRPG terms" and not "in Amber terms."***

I'm not sure I see the difference.

From the essay:

Quote:

*In a game with dice, eventually, someone will succeed or fail purely on the basis of a particularly good or bad roll. For most games that's fine; for Amber that's just the sort of thing that can lead to ruining the feel of the game. Imagine a training session in Castle Amber. A young Amberite is fencing with Benedict. A good roll for the player and a bad roll for the game master and the young Amberite scores a hit. On Benedict. Let me repeat that: one good roll for the player and one bad roll for the game master and the young Amberite scores a hit on Benedict.*

*Now most people would not make you roll for a training-session duel. So, worse, let us assume that was an actual, formal duel. Now, instead of a lucky hit in a training session, functionally impossible to begin with, we now have a young Amberite scoring a hit on Benedict when it means something. This is not Benedict's fight with Corwin by the Black Road, where Corwin, "the second-best swordsman around," got the edge on Benedict only by having and using well his superior knowledge of the terrain to pull a trick. This is a formal duel in Castle Amber, where the terrain is neutral and both combatants are rested and ready. In other words, these are ideal circumstances, yet the dice still provide the chance that the young Amberite might have a prayer of harming Benedict.*

*Now consider that the dice provide that chance to some duelist out of shadow who is not even the equal of our young Amberite. This would blow the feel of the game faster than almost anything else that can happen.*

That seems to strongly imply that the Amberites aren't gonna get beat at what they're best at. That says, to me, that there is no chance of beating them at what they're best at, except by way of using skills and abilities that they aren't best at.

---

PA

Sunday, 22nd December, 2002, 02:53 AM

Re: Re: Re: Re: Priceless

Quote:

*Originally posted by ColonelHardisson*

***That seems to strongly imply that the Amberites aren't gonna get beat at what they're best at. That says, to me, that there is no chance of beating them at what they're best at, except by way of using skills and abilities that they aren't best at.***

There are two main differences:

1) A player character can be better than a feature character. Thus, the system does not especially protect feature characters. In most campaigns, many a PC can beat Merlin in all the four attributes, because Merlin if of the same generation as they and has his points invested elsewhere (in numerous different powers: Pattern, Logrus, Trump, Sorcery...). Yet Merlin is the main character of the second saga.

2) In the example you quote, Corwin is not as good as Benedict with a sword (in Amber DRPG terms, in Warfare), yet he beats him. Why? Not a lucky dice roll but a clever use of the situation: Corwin knew the terrain better (tentacle-like plants nearby) and he assessed that Benedict was too blinded by wrath to be his usual careful self--two facts he used to beat this superior opponent.

---

ColonelHardisson

Sunday, 22nd December, 2002, 03:08 AM

Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Priceless

Quote:

*Originally posted by PA*

**There are two main differences:**

**1) A player character can be better than a feature character. Thus, the system does not especially protect feature characters. In most campaigns, many a PC can beat Merlin in all the four attributes, because Merlin if of the same generation as they and has his points invested elsewhere (in numerous different powers: Pattern, Logrus, Trump, Sorcery...). Yet Merlin is the main character of the second saga.**

**2) In the example you quote, Corwin is not as good as Benedict with a sword (in Amber DRPG terms, in Warfare), yet he beats him. Why? Not a lucky dice roll but a clever use of the situation: Corwin knew the terrain better (tentacle-like plants nearby) and he assessed that Benedict was too blinded by wrath to be his usual careful self--two facts he used to beat this superior opponent.**

1) I see your point on that. I don't think it necessarily negates what I was getting at in general, but I see what you mean. I have the game, but I don't have it handy. As I recall, everyone bids on certain levels of expertise in different areas during PC generation; whoever has the highest level can't be beaten, at least by the other PCs.

2) The example is really not much different than similar situations in many other books. In all the years of playing D&D that I have, I always assumed this was all figured into the game. That is, I, as well as everyone I ever gamed with, never assumed that fighting, as modelled by the D&D rules, was just a matter of standing toe-to-toe and thumping on each other until somebody died. We described how one guy maybe looked tired, or scared, or whatever, and we took into account the use of terrain and other hazards nearby - "I'll rush him and try to push him into the pit" or "I'll make a lot of noise and wake up the roper that is right behind him so it'll grab him." I guess what I'm getting at is that the Amber books don't strike me as being any more or less suited to diceless gaming as any other setting. Or, maybe a better way to put it is that I can see just about any other setting as fitting the rationale for why diceless gaming is better for that particular setting.

Like I said, I don't really see it as a big sticking point. I was just commenting. The books are cool - I need to reread them for the, uhh, let's see, third time (I think), and the game is actually an interesting read. Even if I don't actually play the game as written, it's a great sourcebook.

---

PA

Sunday, 22nd December, 2002, 03:37 AM

Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Priceless

Quote:

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*Originally posted by ColonelHardisson*

**1) I see your point on that. I don't think it necessarily negates what I was getting at in general, but I see what you mean. I have the game, but I don't have it handy. As I recall, everyone bids on certain levels of expertise in different areas during PC generation; whoever has the highest level can't be beaten, at least by the other PCs.**

That's right. Unless said PCs don't fight fair. But who would dare do that in the Amber universe?? :rolleyes:

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by ColonelHardisson*

**2) The example is really not much different than similar situations in many other books. In all the years of playing D&D that I have, I always assumed this was all figured into the game. That is, I, as well as everyone I ever gamed with, never assumed that fighting, as modelled by the D&D rules, was just a matter of standing toe-to-toe and thumping on each other until somebody died. We described how one guy maybe looked tired, or scared, or whatever, and we took into account the use of terrain and other hazards nearby - "I'll rush him and try to push him into the pit" or "I'll make a lot of noise and wake up the roper that is right behind him so it'll grab him." I guess what I'm getting at is that the Amber books don't strike me as being any more or less suited to diceless gaming as any other setting. Or, maybe a better way to put it is that I can see just about any other setting as fitting the rationale for why diceless gaming is better for that particular setting.**

The point is that Amberites are so good at what they're doing that the chance factor becomes nearly irrelevant (what's left of it falls under the Good/Bad Stuff part of the rules). When I went to competition, I happened to slip a few times or to lose balance without being pushed or anything. I'm human. Amberites are not.

And as an aside, regarding d20: even human as I am, if I am facing a yellow belt, I don't see myself losing as frequently as even a 5th level fighter would (according to the dice) against a commoner. And I am certainly not a 5th level fighter, even if I did win matches against competitors from the army.

Quote:

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*Originally posted by ColonelHardisson*

**Like I said, I don't really see it as a big sticking point. I was just commenting. The books are cool - I need to reread them for the, uhh, let's see, third time (I think), and the game is actually an interesting read. Even if I don't actually play the game as written, it's a great sourcebook.**

I'm also just commenting... on your comments. :) Neither of us is going to start a flame war. (OK, my record on those boards is not completely clean, may Kevin and Gary forgive me, but more because of my bad taste in jokes than because of an attitude problem.)

BTW, did you know that Zelazny actually played (and enjoyed) the game?

---

Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 22nd December, 2002, 02:21 PM

Beating the Wind

Yuletide Salutations!



Good grief, who but P-A would dredge up this ancient thread?

It should be pretty well known by all that I consider any game where the players' characters are not fully able to impact the environment, direct their action, determine the outcome of events in which they play a part, and know that what actions their characters are taking have a probability of success and failure that can be determined by random means, cards or dice rather than the whim of the GM, is something other than an RPG,

Authors of fiction, screen plays, and playwrights create stories. GMs direct game play and in conjunction with the players this generates a story whose outcome is not prescribed.

If people enjoy playing limited roles in a game setting in which there are "untouchables," where they must be marionettes for the GM to move about, well and good. It is just not full RPG activity, and often is little more than amateur theatrics, play acting in a minor and surely inferior story line built as an adjunct to the original authored fiction and relatively meaningless to that work. Still, if it's entertaining to the participants, it is fulfilling its purpose, but it ain't RPGing.

This is a dead horse, actually, as something well over nine gamers in 10 have by their choice of game agreed with me. "Storytelling" games have made their advent, gone nowhere thereafter. What more is there to say?

Cheers,  
Gary

---

PA

Sunday, 22nd December, 2002, 03:57 PM

Santa PA

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*  
***Yuletide Salutations!***

---

***Good grief, who but P-A would dredge up this ancient thread?***

---

Consider that my Christmas present.

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***It should be pretty well known by all that I consider any game where the players' characters are not fully able to impact the environment, direct their action, determine the outcome of events in which they play a part, and know that what actions their characters are taking have a probability of success and failure that can be determined by random means, cards or dice rather than the whim of the GM, is something other than an RPG,***

***Authors of fiction, screen plays, and playwrights create stories. GMs direct game play and in conjunction with the players this generates a story whose outcome is not prescribed.***

***If people enjoy playing limited roles in a game setting in which there are "untouchables," where they must be marionettes for the GM to move about, well and good. It is just not full RPG activity, and often is little more than amateur theatrics, play acting in a minor and surely inferior story line built as an adjunct to the original authored fiction and relatively meaningless to that work. Still, if it's entertaining to the participants, it is fulfilling its purpose, but it ain't RPGing.***

***This is a dead horse, actually, as something well over nine gamers in 10 have by their choice of game agreed with me. "Storytelling" games have made their advent, gone nowhere thereafter. What more is there to say?***

---

Eh eh, a lot, but most we have already discussed by email and I have little hope now that you will ever see the light. :) But if you think that nothing the players say without the back up of dice can change what the GM had in mind for them, then it means that you must roll dice for *everything*. No more talking with NPCs, just roll your Diplomacy check (or Charisma check, under OAD&D) and be done with it.

Having been a diceless DM, I remember having let myself swayed by a player's description of how he handled his fight. If indeed I have been too much of a railroader, it is not before my last months as a GM, and when I realized that... I actually stopped RPGing altogether. It came more from my forgetting what it felt to be a player than from gaming diceless, though; I find it also all too easy to railroad a game in which buckets of dice are thrown.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 22nd December, 2002, 04:30 PM

Re: Santa PA

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by PA*

---

***Consider that my Christmas present.***

---

Proof positive that The Grinch was modeled upon none other than you, Dear Fellow!

Happy Christmastime, PA ;)

Warm regards,  
Gary

P.S. Check out my icon on my posts at [www.LejendaryAdventure.com](http://www.LejendaryAdventure.com) and advise me if the one you did of me with the halo would be more appropriate, okay?

---

Cedric

Sunday, 22nd December, 2002, 05:20 PM

Someone may have already asked this question, if so, I apologize...

How do you feel about rolling treasure randomly in 1st Edition and assigning XP to characters for Magic Items they receive?

Cedric

---

PA

Sunday, 22nd December, 2002, 06:39 PM

Re: Re: Santa PA

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***Proof positive that The Grinch was modeled upon none other than you, Dear Fellow!***

***Happy Christmastime, PA ;)***

***Warm regards,  
Gary***

***P.S. Check out my icon on my posts at [www.LejendaryAdventure.com](http://www.LejendaryAdventure.com) and advise me if the one you did of me with the halo would be more appropriate, okay?***

No need to check out, I had already visited the website and its forum, and I do think that the Dr Midnight version you use suits you best.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 22nd December, 2002, 10:04 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Cedric*

***Someone may have already asked this question, if so, I apologize...***

***How do you feel about rolling treasure randomly in 1st Edition and assigning XP to characters for Magic Items they receive?***

***Cedric***

Xmas Greetings, Cedric:)

Nobody has asked that question before this.

Actually we found the random tables great when the PCs were out in the wilderness on non-scripted adventures, encountering monsters randomly, finding treasure likewise. Of course often times the DM added extra monsters guarding the loot--whatever it turned out to be eventually. Mordenkainen did well waylaying bandits, brigands, and pirates thus, but sometimes coming up empty after a hard fight with magic items expended for little reward.

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 22nd December, 2002, 10:07 PM

Santa PA's Vote

Quote:

*Originally posted by PA*

***No need to check out, I had already visited the website and its forum, and I do think that the Dr Midnight version you use suits you best.***

Well excellent, PA!

I had thought I should alter it, and your suggesting the pic remain the devilish one the Good Dr. Midnight devised has tipped the scales.

I have sent off to Dan at Dreams Interactive the jpg in which the saintly halo appears over my head as is proper. I thank you again for that work of true homage, Old Sport!

Merrie Christmas,  
GAry

---

Mark

Sunday, 22nd December, 2002, 10:14 PM

Re: Santa PA

Quote:

*Originally posted by PA*

***I find it also all too easy to railroad a game in which buckets of dice are thrown.***

I would think that, if railroading were the intention, it would be easier in a game with *fewer* built-in variables rather than *more* built-in variables, no?

Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 22nd December, 2002, 10:21 PM

Re: Re: Santa PA

Quote:

*Originally posted by Mark*

***I would think that, if railroading were the intention, it would be easier in a game with fewer built-in variables rather than more built-in variables, no?***

Yes, when variables and outcomes are known, and the random number generation is done so all can see, there is no railroading--make that GM fudging--possible in regards the probabilities and the outcome. When the GM is able to pull "results" out of thin air, there goes a structured game.

Cheerie Holidays,  
Gary

Darrin Drader

Monday, 23rd December, 2002, 12:33 AM

I scoff at diceless roleplaying. How is it any different than a bunch of grown individuals sitting around playing "Lets pretend?"

Seriously Gary, I completely agree with your point of view. You should know too since you invented roleplaying.

Now that I have brown nosed sufficiently, (and pardon me if this question has already been answered), what type of adventure do you find to be the most fun to run - the player killer adventure (Tomb of Horrors - Here's something evil in a big hole with lots of treasure - go kill it. Oh, did I mention it will be impossible?) or a more long-term adventure that involves lots of fights the characters can actually win and an actual plot, such as "Temple of Elemental Evil"?

Aside from these light hearted jabs at your expense (they are classics, you have to make fun of classics, you know...), I am curious which one you enjoy running more.

## Q&A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Show 20 post(s) from this thread on one page

Page 32 of 36 ◀ First ◀ ... 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 36 33 34 35 36 ▶ Last ▶▶

PA

Monday, 23rd December, 2002, 01:56 AM

Hot Pot

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***I have sent off to Dan at Dreams Interactive the jpg in which the saintly halo appears over my head as is proper. I thank you again for that work of true homage, Old Sport!***

I... I don't see what you mean. I cannot remember. You must have been hallucinating, or you're actually thinking about another Frenchman. François, peut-être ?

Quote:

*Originally posted by Mark*

***I would think that, if railroading were the intention, it would be easier in a game with fewer built-in variables rather than more built-in variables, no?***

It depends. I never said that it would be easier with dice, just... easy too. Rolls behind a screen can be fudged and, even without reaching to such lengths, if you want, for instance, that the party wins a fight, you just have to have the bad guys take decisions which are not exactly the best according to the circumstances.

Railroading is easy, dice or not; it may be harder with dice, since some rolls are not under your control, or it may be harder without, as players will be more watchful and more critical.

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***Yes, when variables and outcomes are known, and the random number generation is done so all can see, there is no railroading--make that GM fudging--possible in regards the probabilities and the outcome. When the GM is able to pull "results" out of thin air, there goes a structured game.***

You only pull "results" out of thin air if you don't really listen to your players. That's like if, when I have my students take an oral, instead of listening to them and judging their abilities, I just gave them a random grade.

Quote:

*Originally posted by Baraendur*

***I scoff at diceless roleplaying.***

Since so many people scoff at roleplaying in general, you're in good company.

Quote:

*Originally posted by Baraendur*

***How is it any different than a bunch of grown individuals sitting around playing "Lets pretend?"***

And dice make it suddenly so much more mature. :rolleyes:

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 23rd December, 2002, 01:51 PM

Random Chance

The following is posted without further comment, and each gamer here can draw their own conclusions from what is written.

ON THE ELEMENT OF CHANCE

The following quote is drawn from an essay by George Orwell, "Politics and the English Language, 1946". It can be found in its entirety on the internet at <http://www.resort.com/~prime8/Orwell/patee.html>

...

"Here is a well-known verse from Ecclesiastes:

"I returned and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.

"Here it is in modern English:

"Objective considerations of contemporary phenomena compel the conclusion that success or failure in competitive activities exhibits no tendency to be commensurate with innate capacity, but that a considerable element of the unpredictable must invariably be taken into account."

Yuletide best,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 23rd December, 2002, 02:07 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Baraendur*

***I scoff at diceless roleplaying. How is it any different than a bunch of grown individuals sitting around playing "Lets pretend?"***

***Seriously Gary, I completely agree with your point of view. You should know too since you invented roleplaying.***

***Now that I have brown nosed sufficiently, (and pardon me if this question has already been answered), what type of adventure do you find to be the most fun to run - the player killer adventure (Tomb of Horrors - Here's something evil in a big hole with lots of treasure - go kill it. Oh, did I mention it will be impossible?) or a more long-term adventure that involves lots of fights the characters can actually win and an actual plot, such as "Temple of Elemental Evil"?***

***Aside from these light hearted jabs at your expense (they are classics, you have to make fun of classics, you know...), I am curious which one you enjoy running more.***

---

Happy Christmas!

As for the lack of ability of players to decide their destiny by use of random number generation--as opposed to being puppets of the "sotryteller," see my post immediately before this one. It ain't an RPG without chance entering into play;)

The sort of adventure that is best is that which most amused the GM and players at the time it is being played. At least that's how I see it. The one-off sort of killer adventure, such as the ToH, is great for a change of pace from the long and drawn out campaign kind that are found in the VoH-ToEE modules. Variery is indeed the spice of gaming life, eh?

It is interesting that you bring up this subject, as I have just finished the final polish of a very long and varied "super module" that contains just about every sort of adventure one might want...I hope. Hopefully, Troll Lord Games will find a way to publish it--the ms. runs to 515 ms, pages, plus maps. It is dual system, d20 and the LA game. My play-test group has been at it for months now and are not yet near the end. To make sure it was coherant, though, we had three developers working on it. and the double check of making it d20 first has confirmed the whole of the material.

Baraendur, if you eventually play the HALL OF MANY PANES, see if you find I favor a particular scenario type. Just remember that for the sake of a published module, I do include a lot of hack & slash, for that's clearly the most popular material ;)

Yuletide best,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 23rd December, 2002, 02:16 PM

Pot Shots :D

Quote:

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*Originally posted by PA*

***I... I don't see what you mean. I cannot remember. You must have been hallucinating, or you're actually thinking about another Frenchman. François, peut-être ?***

---

Allow me to refresh your memory, My Dear Friend. You provided that true portrait of me so as to elicit from me the assurance that I would dispose of another jpg you has sent to me in error. Now, seeing as how you are not positive I did that, perhaps you can better recall that you did indeed depict me with a bright and glowing halo crowning my head...

Quote:

---

***Since so many people scoff at roleplaying in general, you're in good company.***

***And dice make it suddenly so much more mature. :rolleyes:***

---

Thankfully, amateur theater is not the same as playing an RPG, and of course having random chance in full play is something that differentiates "Let's PRetend" from the game form, the actual RPG.

Dice do make the game, mature or otherwise.

PA

Monday, 23rd December, 2002, 06:21 PM

Re: Random Chance

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**The following is posted without further comment, and each gamer here can draw their own conclusions from what is written.**

**ON THE ELEMENT OF CHANCE**

**The following quote is drawn from an essay by George Orwell, "Politics and the English Language, 1946". It can be found in its entirety on the internet at <http://www.resort.com/~prime8/Orwell/patee.html>**

...

**"Here is a well-known verse from Ecclesiastes:**

**"I returned and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.**

**"Here it is in modern English:**

**"Objective considerations of contemporary phenomena compel the conclusion that success or failure in competitive activities exhibits no tendency to be commensurate with innate capacity, but that a considerable element of the unpredictable must invariably be taken into account."**

**Yuletide best,  
Gary**

I agree that chance has a lot to do with success in our world, for human beings. I don't agree it holds true with Amberites, though, as (1) Amberites and their likes are good/skillful enough (very high inborn abilities and centuries to perfect themselves) to reduce the chance factor to nearly nothing, and (2) as Corwin puts it, the worlds (Shadow) tend to bend to accommodate them. Some Amberites are more favored than others, here also I agree, but that's what the Good/Bad Stuff mechanics is all about.

PA

Monday, 23rd December, 2002, 06:22 PM

The Hole of Many Pains/Puns

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**Allow me to refresh your memory, My Dear Friend. You provided that true portrait of me so as to elicit from me the assurance that I would dispose of another jpg you have sent to me in error. Now, seeing as how you are not positive I did that, perhaps you can better recall that you did indeed depict me with a bright and glowing halo crowning my head...**

I still cannot remember. Cannot cannot cannot. Don't insist.

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**Thankfully, amateur theater is not the same as playing an RPG, and of course having random chance in full play is something that differentiates "Let's Pretend" from the game form, the actual RPG.**

The difference between amateur theater and diceless RPG is that, in the first case, the amateur actors usually follow a script, while in the second, YOU think they do.

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**Dice do make the game, mature or otherwise.**

Castle Falkenstein is no RPG either now... how sad... But Dragon Dice has become one!

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 23rd December, 2002, 06:53 PM

Panes, Pains, and Puns

Well, PA, one can not dispute that there are many sorts of games, but most do not masquerade, pretend to something they are not.

As for your header, indeed! The HALL OF MANY PANES module can inflict many pains on the rash and unprepared character. Even the best of players, though, can not escape the pain of the many puns included therein. Indeed one scenario centers on that very thing, the true grateness of the pun :D

Cheerie Christmas Wishes,

Gary

---

Drew

Monday, 23rd December, 2002, 07:56 PM

Since this massive thread is still alive, I thought I had might as well chime in with a question for Mr. Gygax.

Gary, during the now famous "Gary Gygax, Lurker?" thread in which you first appeared on ENWorld I asked you a small favor. My homebrewed D&D world has a god of magic that, at the time, was without a name. I asked you to please name my god for me, if only so that I could claim E. Gary Gygax created a tiny part of my world. :D

I wrote the name you gave me down in my campaign notebook, which mysteriously dissapeared a few days later. Due to a cruel failure of memory, the name you gave me is now gone.

If it isn't too much trouble, would you please rename my magic god? I don't care what you come up with...just anything off the top of your head. My homebrewed world is called Terren, and is a fairly typical D&D setting. The magic god is something of an outcast. He was banished for teaching the art of magic to mortals (much like Prometheus) and has been working in secret in another guise since then.

At some point in the future, the Magic God will be making a grand return to Terren. Before he can do so...he needs a name! So, if you don't mind, please rename my magic god once again. I'll be sure to put the name in a very safe place.

Thanks in advance and Merry Christmas!:D

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 23rd December, 2002, 08:50 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Drew*

...

**Gary, during the now famous "Gary Gygax, Lurker?" thread in which you first appeared on ENWorld I asked you a small favor. My homebrewed D&D world has a god of magic that, at the time, was without a name. I asked you to please name my god for me, if only so that I could claim E. Gary Gygax created a tiny part of my world. :D**

**I wrote the name you gave me down in my campaign notebook, which mysteriously dissapeared a few days later. Due to a cruel failure of memory, the name you gave me is now gone.**

...

---

Whoa! Drew, that mysterious disappearance... Coincidence? I think not. You see, the Veiled Lord of Magic, Ahethon, must have had a hand in the matter. As he has many names, the one above is as good as one of the others. He pronounces it "Ah-HETH-un" BTW ;)

Christmas best,  
Gary

---

Joshua Randall

Monday, 23rd December, 2002, 08:53 PM

Re: Random Chance

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**"I returned and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.**

Or, as Damon Runyon would have it:

"The race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong -- but that's the way to bet it."

<http://www.creativequotations.com/one/1452.htm>

;)

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 23rd December, 2002, 10:27 PM

Re: Re: Random Chance

Quote:

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*Originally posted by JERandall*

**Or, as Damon Runyon would have it:**

**"The race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong -- but that's the way to bet it."**

<http://www.creativequotations.com/one/1452.htm>

;)

---

Yes, no doubt, and the stats and probabilities set forth in the game system enable the player to judge how to wager, and then in a real RPG said

player generates the random result that determines if the "bet" was well founded;)

Yuletide cheer,  
Gary

---

MerricB

Monday, 23rd December, 2002, 11:42 PM

G'day Gary!

Wow... PA returns with a vengeance, and inflames a discussion about my two favourite RPGs: D&D and Amber.

Oh wait... Amber isn't a RPG. It's a DRP experience. Under no circumstances do I consider Amber to be a *game*. Highly enjoyable with the right GM, but not a game. (Even GM is utterly the wrong term... :))

I feel that an RPG is a *game* (with some random element), where the rules may be broken by the GM.

However... is Chess a game? No random element... like Amber DRP...

If Amber had slightly more strict rules, would it then become a RPG?

Cheers!

---

Darrin Drader

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 12:22 AM

PA, regarding the "diceless RPG" issue, this board is set up for D&D 3E and D20 games fans. I think that dice are integral to both of these items, so you probably aren't going to find too many supporters or converts to your point of view here. I'm not saying that interactive storytelling can't be cool, but I don't buy into the notion that we're still talking about the same game/experience.

Please don't take this personally but I think you should stop trying to hijack this man's thread. Last time I checked, this thread was called "Ongoing Q&A with Gary Gyxax - get your questions answered!," not "PA's discussion about the pros and cons of diceless roleplaying."

---

PA

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 12:31 AM

Re: Panes, Pains, and Puns

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***Indeed one scenario centers on that very thing, the true grateness of the pun :D***

---

I'd rather go back to the Temple of Elemental Evil, then walk through Necropolis, before visiting the sewers of Waterdeep. I would die too (many times over) but I would stay clean.

---

PA

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 12:43 AM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Baraendur*

***PA, regarding the "diceless RPG" issue, this board is set up for D&D 3E and D20 games fans. I think that dice are integral to both of these items, so you probably aren't going to find too many supporters or converts to your point of view here. I'm not saying that interactive storytelling can't be cool, but I don't buy into the notion that we're still talking about the same game/experience.***

---

So, when during a D&D session you spend one hour without rolling a dice (it must have happened even to you), you are no longer RPGing?

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Baraendur*

***Please don't take this personally but I think you should stop trying to hijack this man's thread. Last time I checked, this thread was called "Ongoing Q&A with Gary Gyxax - get your questions answered!," not "PA's discussion about the pros and cons of diceless roleplaying."***

---

Last time I checked, before I posted, that thread was long dead, as Gary himself stressed out. This question "is diceless still RPG?" has been a subject of discussion between the both of us for quite some time. Though we exchanged more than a dozen emails on the subject, some while ago, it is the first time I bring it on those boards, so to get some more opinions, more ideas and examples, from more people. You'll notice that "this man" has answered and even presented new arguments (biblical quotes, of all things). Had he thought I was "hijacking his thread," I don't think he would have bothered.

---

Darrin Drader

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 03:03 AM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by PA*

***You'll notice that "this man" has answered and even presented new arguments (biblical quotes, of all things). Had he thought I was "hijacking his thread," I don't think he would have bothered.***

---

Hmm, good point. You've got me there.



---

Quote:

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*Originally posted by PA*

---

***So, when during a D&D session you spend one hour without rolling a dice (it must have happened even to you), you are no longer RPGing?***

---

Well, in fact it has, obviously. If it hadn't I would be guilty of munchkinism (which Gyax has defended in Dragon and would be the subject of a very interesting debate). I'm fairly certain that this is a pretty common experience actually.

It isn't so much that a person isn't RPGing if the dice aren't rolled for over an hour, but rather that something that doesn't require a random factor hasn't occurred. Perhaps the party is questioning witnesses, perhaps they are trying the fine dining at the local tavern, or perhaps I (the DM) am too busy eating pizza to want to start an encounter requiring a bunch of dice rolling (grease stains on the notepaper looks tacky and makes it hard to write on).

On the other hand, where it comes to combat, picking locks, and other skilled items, the most interesting way to do it is with a randomness factor. Now a storyteller could simulate the random factor by using statistics, allowing for example 1 out of every 3 actions to succeed, but in doing so, some of the fun and excitement of RPGing is missed. It also doesn't take into account that one lucky shot, that unexpected run of good rolls, or someone who is just a bad die roller in general (speaking of which, there is a reason that my players love me as a DM) ;)

---

PA

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 03:45 AM

Optional Post Subject

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Quote:

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*Originally posted by Baraendur*

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***Well, in fact it has, obviously. If it hadn't I would be guilty of munchkinism (which Gyax has defended in Dragon and would be the subject of a very interesting debate). I'm fairly certain that this is a pretty common experience actually.***

---

***It isn't so much that a person isn't RPGing if the dice aren't rolled for over an hour, but rather that something that doesn't require a random factor hasn't occurred. Perhaps the party is questioning witnesses, perhaps they are trying the fine dining at the local tavern, or perhaps I (the DM) am too busy eating pizza to want to start an encounter requiring a bunch of dice rolling (grease stains on the notepaper looks tacky and makes it hard to write on).***

---

***On the other hand, where it comes to combat, picking locks, and other skilled items, the most interesting way to do it is with a randomness factor. Now a storyteller could simulate the random factor by using statistics, allowing for example 1 out of every 3 actions to succeed, but in doing so, some of the fun and excitement of RPGing is missed. It also doesn't take into account that one lucky shot, that unexpected run of good rolls, or someone who is just a bad die roller in general (speaking of which, there is a reason that my players love me as a DM) ;)***

---

So when you describe how your character faces someone with a sword, you need to roll a dice, but when you describe how your character faces someone with words, you do not?

Well, according to 3e rules, you do: diplomacy, bluff, intimidate, sense motive checks and all that. But my point is: you CAN do without. So can you with combat, and in a similar way: by using descriptions, by using wits.

Now, do I think it would work for any game, for any universe? Nay. I am talking about Amber here, a world in which those "lucky shots" that you mention never seem to happen. In the novels, the best fighter wins, unless he is outsmarted (as Benedict is tricked by Corwin).

Of course, you can then ask me: what the f\* does it have to do with D&D, or d20? And my answer is: er, not much. As I said, I just wanted to inject some fresh blood in a subject that Gary and I actually discussed now and again many times for the past year. We will never agree. Because he is wrong, of course, since I am always right, but I still find the discussion interesting. :D

And thank you for making it more so.

---

Drew

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 06:11 AM

Ahethon it is! Thank you very much! The veiled god of magic...yes, that's perfect.

---

Darrin Drader

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 06:14 AM

Re: Optional Post Subject

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Quote:

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*Originally posted by PA*

---

***Well, according to 3e rules, you do: diplomacy, bluff, intimidate, sense motive checks and all that. But my point is: you CAN do without. So can you with combat, and in a similar way: by using descriptions, by using wits.***

---

Well, 3E rules provide mechanics to determine how successful you are when situations requiring the skills you have mentioned come into play. Personally, I am of the school of thought that states that a character who is particularly good verbal communicator shouldn't have to roll to determine success if they come up with something that seems reasonable, brilliant, or inspired unless I as the DM don't already know how the character is going to react to a certain line of questioning or request the characters might make. On the other hand I've played with players that

enjoy hack and slash more than diplomacy, so they actually prefer the dice rolls to the drawn out in-character conversations.

On a related topic I did run an instant message session of a game a couple years back. During that one the only die rolls were made where I couldn't see them, so I could only assume honesty. There weren't a lot of die rolls during that session because the characters spent most of the time sneaking around and spying. It actually remains one of the more memorable game sessions I have run. Having said that though, I wouldn't choose to run too many sessions like that simply because the focus does shift a bit from the risky elements of combat or whatever to cunning plans and diplomacy.

You may be surprised to find out that my games are always plot heavy, which could easily lend itself to diceless RPGing. Combat encounters are rarely random, and if the player isn't paying attention, he won't know what to do next. I try not to lead the players by the nose, but at the same time it does no good to plan an adventure and have them turn a tangential encounter into the night's session. I think the dice make the game more interesting. Maybe Amber is different, I haven't played it, but I have a hard time imagining playing a game where there isn't some degree of chance. As a matter of fact, chance seems to be the one thing that most RPG's have in common with most traditional board games.

ColonelHardisson

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 06:31 AM

Re: Optional Post Subject

Quote:

*Originally posted by PA*

***Now, do I think it would work for any game, for any universe? Nay. I am talking about Amber here, a world in which those "lucky shots" that you mention never seem to happen. In the novels, the best fighter wins, unless he is outsmarted (as Benedict is tricked by Corwin).***

I guess what I was trying to get at above, is that just about any book I've ever read in the fantasy genre seems to eschew the "lucky shot," or at least makes it seem like there was a higher reason for a supposedly random event to happen. It doesn't strike me that Amber is unique in that regard. Take "The Worm Ouroburos" by E.R. Eddison as an example - everything happens because it's supposed to happen, the good guys win in the end because they are supposed to win, because they are the best at what they do. In scifi, look at Asimov's original "Foundation" trilogy as examples - Seldon figured everything out millennia ahead of time. I understand the argument, that the best swordsman (or whatever) isn't going to be beat at his own game due to some random occurrence, but, as I said, this doesn't seem to be something confined to Amber at all.

Sanackranib

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 06:32 AM

Re: Re: Santa PA

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***Yes, when variables and outcomes are known, and the random number generation is done so all can see, there is no railroading--make that GM fudging--possible in regards the probabilities and the outcome. When the GM is able to pull "results" out of thin air, there goes a structured game.***

***Cheerie Holidays,  
Gary***

On the old 1e charts where it was possible to have some weak monster guarding a random treasure (which turned out to be - say a +5 sword) the DM had to fudge the rolls else lose the balance of the game. that is one thing that I am glad has been adjusted for 3e. giving the monsters a treasure based on CR was a really good idea.

PA

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 06:59 AM

Re: Re: Optional Post Subject

Quote:

*Originally posted by Baraendur*

***Having said that though, I wouldn't choose to run too many sessions like that simply because the focus does shift a bit from the risky elements of combat or whatever to cunning plans and diplomacy.***

Welcome to Amber. :) It is true that, though swashbuckling at times, the series is more about... cunning plans and treach... I mean, and diplomacy.

I've not been a GM at it very often. And I've not been a very good one (I'm never very good at using someone else's NPCs). But I loved it as a player, and I didn't feel like I was walking through a pre-written script. On the contrary, I was let free to come up with my own "cunning plans", I had my own agenda, as had most of the players, and the GM often had to improvise.

It is very hard to (discreetly) railroad players in a universe where so much is possible, where most characters can just go wherever in Shadow (a multiverse) they want, find whatever they want, try whatever they want. Of course, most Amber DRPG GMs will have a plot in mind, will have an idea of what important is going on (after all, NPCs have "cunning plans" of their own), but I have never played another game that lets so much freedom to the players... and asks so much improvisation skills from the GM.

PA

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 07:06 AM

Re: Re: Optional Post Subject

Quote:

*Originally posted by ColonelHardisson*

*I guess what I was trying to get at above, is that just about any book I've ever read in the fantasy genre seems to eschew the "lucky shot," or at least makes it seem like there was a higher reason for a supposedly random event to happen. It doesn't strike me that Amber is unique in that regard. Take "The Worm Ouroboros" by E.R. Eddison as an example - everything happens because it's supposed to happen, the good guys win in the end because they are supposed to win, because they are the best at what they do. In scifi, look at Asimov's original "Foundation" trilogy as examples - Seldon figured everything out millennia ahead of time. I understand the argument, that the best swordsman (or whatever) isn't going to be beat at his own game due to some random occurrence, but, as I said, this doesn't seem to be something confined to Amber at all.*

---

Seldon's predictions finally failed, remember? And even before that, he specified that his psychohistory could in no way predict the actions of individuals, only of populations, and very large ones at that.

I remember many books in which a fight seems to have that "random element" that the dice can represent in RPG. Fights by the Grey Mouser, by Conan, even by Elric at times (though not often, with Stormbringer in hand, and a destiny laid upon his shoulders).

Amber does strike me as particular in that respect. It is not just that "it is not random since it is a novel, with a purpose." It is really part of the universe, not of the meta-universe (the writing).

---

## Hadit

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 07:45 AM

Hey you guys, this is the "Ongoing Q&A with Gary Gygax" thread... if you want to debate about the merits of diceless gaming, why don't you start a new thread? Mr. Gygax has already gave an answer in regards.

Now then...

I am aware that you are very active on many boards Gary, and I could ask my questions at any of these, but I just discovered this one and I enjoy the new environment!

First let me say that it took me around 5 hours to plow through this thread's entirety, but the handful of gems I recovered were worth it! The availability at which you offer yourself to the gaming community has no precedence that I know of... thank-you heartily!

I enjoy hearing how your early play-test games (and maybe even your current LA games) were with what seems to be about 3-4 players, sometimes as little as 1 or 2! This mirrors my own gaming experience fully! I have always sort have wondered about those early AD&D modules claiming to require "8-12" players and what-not... what the hell? I have NEVER had an opportunity to play with that many people in a setting and frankly wouldn't want to! What a headache! (The closest has been about 6, I think, at the Dragonflight con up here in Seattle) I generally prefer 3-4 players tops.

<Spoiler Alert!>

Another thought that was triggered by a previous post... "Return to the Temple of Elemental Evil", by Monte Cook, posits the notion that the Elder Elemental Eye worshipped by Eclavdra's faction of drow is an avatar of Dread Tharizdun. It has been some time since I read the "Gord the Rogue" series, and I can't recall if this is something you put forth in those books, or it is something totally made up by Monte. (I actually DO like this explanation of things because I've always pondered about the nature of the Elder Elemental Eye and how it could be so alluring as to draw a faction of drow away from the worship of Lolth).

(If this is NOT what you intended... in Monte's defense I will say that I believe that he wrote RttToEE in complete admiration of your original works... it simply shows in the writing).

Anyhow, thanks Gary, and happy solstice!

---

## Piratecat

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 01:18 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Hadit*

***Hey you guys, this is the "Ongoing Q&A with Gary Gygax" thread... if you want to debate about the merits of diceless gaming, why don't you start a new thread?***

---

This suggestion comes with the new Moderator Stamp of Approval (tm)!

---

## Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 02:36 PM

Happy Christmas Eve!

Merric, I concur with your assessment. Diceless and "storytelling" games are not RPGs, but that is not to say that they are not games, nor to claim they lack high entertainment value--fun! My complaint has been that these games could not claim to be RPGs, nor should those that tout them claim any "adult" or "sophistication" merit because they have no random chance.

Of course chess has no random element, other than the state of the opponents during the course of play. It is not a RPG, nor do its proponents claim it to be.

As for PA's calling attention to the fact that many an RPG session has little or no random chance element interjected into a play session, this is so. However these RPGs can include that when needed or desired. In a private email I called his attention to this, and the fact that the "diceless" game can not do, as it is not an RPG, has been emasculated by the excision of random chance.)

Yuletide beast,  
Gary

---

## PA

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 05:46 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Piratecat*

***This suggestion comes with the new Moderator Stamp of Approval (tm)!***

---

Could you ban Col\_Pladoh, then? He's posted on the subject after your warning!

---

PA

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 06:06 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**Merric, I concur with your assessment. Diceless and "storytelling" games are not RPGs, but that is not to say that they are not games, nor to claim they lack high entertainment value--fun! My complaint has been that these games should not claim to be RPGs, nor should those that tout them claim any "adult" or "sophistication" merit because they have no random chance.**

---

I don't remember Amber DRPG doing that. The first RPG whose proponents claimed it was more mature than the rest, when it came out at least, was Vampire. And there are buckets of dice in that game.

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**Of course chess has no random element, other than the state of the opponents during the course of play. It is not a RPG, nor do its proponents claim it to be.**

---

It's hard to roleplay "characters" who die so often and so fast. :p

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**As for PA's calling attention to the fact that many an RPG session has little or no random chance element interjected into a play session, this is so. However these RPGs can include that when needed or desired. In a private email I called his attention to this, and the fact that the "diceless" game can not do, as it is not an RPG, has been emasculated by the excision of random chance;)**

---

So dice are balls? I thought only the d100 qualified. :rolleyes: And the *possibility* of a die being rolled is enough to make it an RPG, even if it never happens? :confused: Ah, alright, forget it, I wouldn't want to drag this particular discussion into year 2003. At least I'll have dug out this thread again for more questions to come your way. As I said when I started: consider that your Christmas present. :eek:)

---

PA

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 06:17 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**Yuletide beast,**

---

Could you provide stats for this beast? I'm sure many a DM/LM on those boards would be interested in including it into their holiday games. :D

It would be fun, honestly. :cool:

---

Darius101

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 07:54 PM

Pa? what the heck is wrong with you

First I must say I have been a lurker here for a while.

Col\_ P I have enjoyed the fact that you can be approachable enough to ask questions to. Thank you sir.

PA what is wrong with you? First what is your intent in playing any games in the first place? To me you sound as if you are crying about your games that you GM. Or at least used to GM for.

The question of randomness has come up. I agree that randomness is a big part of RPG's but the main element should be on fun and story not things that have nothing to do with the games.

The questions I had while reading those posts were a diceless system is fun and it is a form of roleplaying. What is the big deal here PA?? Gary answered your questions and you're just trying to fight with him. You have made no point at all and are running in circles.

Hard to roleplay characters who die so fast? What???? If you played them properly they wouldn't die so fast now would they? Sorry had to post that .....it irked me and has been part of many a confrontation on the gaming table.

Now, after all that has been said and removed from my cluttered mind.

Gary I have very much enjoyed your adventures over the years. I would like to say thanks you have made some interesting times for my gaming groups over the last 25 - 28 years now. What would you like to see as far as adventures go? I know you enjoy playing almost as much as DMing a game.

Merry Christmas all,

Darius101 :D

p.s. the maturity comes not from the game being played (ever seen adults playing casino games) but from the individuals that are playing it, no matter what the game is. some people believe that life is a game...could be there are many random events and circumstances that come to mind that do not involve dice rolling.

Could chess be considered a game or a sport?

Game = ?

Sport = ?

You tell me .....

He who knows all, knows nothing .....

---

Mark

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 08:22 PM

Re: Pa? what the heck is wrong with you

:) Welcome to the Boards, Darius101! :)

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Darius101 (to PA)*

**Gary answered your questions and your just trying to fight with him. You have made no point at all and are running in circles.**

---

They do this whenever PA has the time to show up to the boards and playfully be a thorn in Mr. Gygax' side. Don't let it worry you. It rarely comes to actual blows... :)

---

PA

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 08:48 PM

Better you than me

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Mark*

**They do this whenever PA has the time to show up to the boards and playfully be a thorn in Mr. Gygax' side. Don't let it worry you. It rarely comes to actual blows... :)**

---

I'm not stupid. Who would exchange blows with someone who can summon a mace +1 as a free action? (And let's not mention the yapping cohorts...)

---

Sniktch

Tuesday, 24th December, 2002, 09:17 PM

Re: Pa? what the heck is wrong with you

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Darius101*

**First I must say i have been a lurker here for a while.**

**Col\_ P I have enjoyed the fact that you can be approachable enough to ask questions to. Thank you sir.**

**p.s. the maturity comes not from the game being played (ever seen adults playing casino games) but from the individuals that are playing it, no matter what the game is. some people believe that life is a game...could be there are many random events and circumstances that come to mind that do not involve dice rolling.**

**Could chess be considered a game or a sport?**

**Game = ?**

**Sport = ?**

**You tell me .....**

**He who knows all, knows nothing .....**

---

Wow, I just found this thread, wish I'd stopped by earlier. I'd also like to thank Col\_P for giving us so much of his time and thoughts. Makes me wish the internet had been so easily accessible back in the days of 1E.

Kinda off-topic, I know, but they did a study at Princeton that proved that a 5 hour chess game was just as *physically* exhausting as 10 rounds of boxing, minus the blows of course. I would place chess as a sport. Just my opinion, and the last I'll post on the subject - I'm heading back to page 1 now to catch up :)

---

Azzemmell

Wednesday, 25th December, 2002, 05:47 AM

\*huffing and puffing\* Man, you can see my house from the top of this thread. :)

Col\_P, just wondering, but what gaming products are you hoping for/did you get for xmas? I recall your statements about not having time to read much, but I wondered if there was a book that you simply HAD to have.

That makes me wonder... do you have a large collection of RPG books for reference and ideas? It seems many other RPG designers have large libraries of such.

I, personally, am hoping for the Scarred Lands GM Screen (even though I don't play in SL) or some counters from Fiery Dragon... mmm, counters.

Merry Christmas... hey, how did this dead horse get up here?... :)

---

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 26th December, 2002, 02:20 PM

A Sad Christmas Tale

I came down with a migraine on Christmas Eve, but thanks to black coffee and aspirins, it was no problem. We made our rounds of friends' places, and I had a great time, even so far as to relating a horrible pun as a story appropriate to the occasion of family and friends gathered for the special celebration. Better still, nobody threw food at me as they groaned and said how stupid a "joke" that was. That made me breathe a sigh of relief, as there were about 20 people there as victims...

On Xmas day I was not much "fun" as the headache had really set in. My "wish list" was small, so I received few presents, and that's as planned. What I will do, though, is to use funds given from now through the New Year to buy such games and books as I spot and desire. Well, as many as a couple of hundred bucks will buy, anyway. I also want to get some CDs, classical music, but that can wait until next summer when my birthday anniversary rolls around.

As for PA, he is not really an antagonist, just someone who enjoys being contentious now and again :rolleyes:

Happy New Year to All,  
Gary

PA

Thursday, 26th December, 2002, 02:37 PM

Father!

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**As for PA, he is not really an antagonist, just someone who enjoys being contentious now and again :rolleyes:**

Oh come on. Recently again, you were talking about adopting me.

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 26th December, 2002, 02:47 PM

Re: Father!

Quote:

*Originally posted by PA*

**Oh come on. Recently again, you were talking about adopting me.**

That was with the understanding that you would do all the cooking here, right?

Heh,  
Happy New Year,  
Gary

PA

Thursday, 26th December, 2002, 02:48 PM

Re: Re: Father!

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**That was with the understanding that you would do all the cooking here, right?**

Roll your save against poison. :(

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 26th December, 2002, 03:26 PM

Further to Father!

Quote:

*Originally posted by PA*

**Roll your save against poison. :(**

So, who can blame me for wanting to sell PA to that band of Gypsies looking for children?

Cheers,  
Gary

Show 20 post(s) from this thread on one page

## Q&amp;A with Gary Gygax - Part I

Printable View

Show 20 post(s) from this thread on one page

Page 34 of 36   First   ...   24   25   26   27   28   29   30   31   32   33   36   35   36   Last

PA

Thursday, 26th December, 2002, 03:46 PM

Where is the Holy Spirit?

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh****So, who can blame me for wanting to sell PA to that band of Gypsies looking for children?***

Too bad they actually asked for money to get you rid of me, uh?

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 26th December, 2002, 04:17 PM

Re: Where is the Holy Spirit?

Quote:

*Originally posted by PA****Too bad they actually asked for money to get you rid of me, uh?***

No question about that!

Post-Xmas ho-ho-hos!

Gary

MerricB

Thursday, 26th December, 2002, 09:12 PM

Well, Christmas for me was the worst I've had in recorded memory. Oh, it's the only one I've recorded. Then I better say 'in my memory'. :)( [The reason why](#))

I got given Carcassonne... my father and I are already tinkering with the rules because Farmers make the game less fun. At least the way I use 'em.

Boxing Day was significantly better. Mainly because I got to see The Two Towers (opening day here in Australia). Very happy about that.

Anyway, D&D tonight - my County of Ulek campaign continues. Once more I must wrestle with how much time I require characters to train before gaining a level. One thing I've noticed - whenever you start putting a deadline on the characters achieving a goal (stopping the invading army, that sort of thing), using formal training becomes quite difficult.

Gary - how did you deal with this? Were you somewhat flexible with regards to training, or were you more rigid? "Oh, you've gained 2,001 XP, eh? Well, get to your tutor if you want that new level, because otherwise it isn't happening!"

Best wishes to you and your family!

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 27th December, 2002, 12:36 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by MerricB****Gary - how did you deal with this? Were you somewhat flexible with regards to training, or were you more rigid? "Oh, you've gained 2,001 XP, eh? Well, get to your tutor if you want that new level, because otherwise it isn't happening!"******Best wishes to you and your family!***

When I ran my AD&D campaign, training was generally quite informal and considered to be done "on the job" as it were. Only if a virtual windfall of XPs came at once did I call for PCs to take a protracted period of time from adventuring to do their studies, train, be educated, gain experience, and practice what they had learned. A week to a month was the normal period. Otherwise, it was subsumed that the time between adventures was spent thus.

Merric, I can comiserate in regards the lack of holiday joy, as I lost my father shortly after New Year back when I was 17, and of course he was at the last of his days during the Christmas period, the end of a long bout with cancer. It is all too recent in memory despite the many years that have passed.

On to a far more positive note, I have had an old map of Carcassonne for many years, and since I heard about the game I have wondered how it plays. It seems right up my alley. When you've had a chance to play sufficiently to evaluate it, I'd love to hear about your experience :)



Cheers,  
Gary

---

Sniktch

Wednesday, 8th January, 2003, 07:39 PM

Sea of Death

I recently got my hands on a copy of this book and really enjoyed it! Reading about Eclavdra and Obmi and the like really brought me back to some classic old memories of gaming in Greyhawk in the early 80's.

I also remember a short story featuring Gord the Rogue and the Cat Lord in an old issue of Dragon, but could you tell me what other books are in the series, what order they were released in, and where I might be able to find them? I'd love to read more but I don't know where to start looking.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 8th January, 2003, 07:57 PM

Re: Sea of Death

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Sniktch*

***I recently got my hands on a copy of this book and really enjoyed it! Reading about Eclavdra and Obmi and the like really brought me back to some classic old memories of gaming in Greyhawk in the early 80's.***

***I also remember a short story featuring Gord the Rogue and the Cat Lord in an old issue of Dragon, but could you tell me what other books are in the series, what order they were released in, and where I might be able to find them? I'd love to read more but I don't know where to start looking.***

---

Thanks for the good words, Sniktch:)

The long short story appeared in DRAGON #100.

All of the books are OOP--although there should soon be an announcement about the release of a graphic version of them coming later on this year... I hope. Meantime, the best place to find them is Ebay.

The books, in reading order are:

SAGA OF OLD CITY  
ARTIFACT OF EVIL  
CITY OF HAWKS  
NIGHT ARRANT  
SEA OF DEATH  
DANCE OF DEMONS  
COME ENDLESS DARKNESS

Cheerio,  
Gary

---

Sniktch

Wednesday, 8th January, 2003, 08:09 PM

Thanks for the quick response (although to be honest, I waited to ask until I knew you were online :D). I'll start my digging on e-Bay, then, and I'm really looking forward to hearing more news about the possible forthcoming graphic novels.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 8th January, 2003, 08:31 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Sniktch*

***Thanks for the quick response (although to be honest, I waited to ask until I knew you were online :D). I'll start my digging on e-Bay, then, and I'm really looking forward to hearing more news about the possible forthcoming graphic novels.***

---

Right! I am quite enthused about the graphic novels, having seen samples of the really excellent illustration (full color) that is being done for the series. The material from CITY OF HAWKS is being used to completely fill in the base of the initial novel, SAGA OF OLD CITY, and will also be used thus in the ARTIFACT OF EVIL graphic novel. I suppose it is obvious that I am most anxious to see the work in print :D

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Darrin Drader

Thursday, 9th January, 2003, 01:53 AM

Re: Re: Sea of Death

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***All of the books are OOP--although there should soon be an announcement about the release of a graphic version of them coming later on this year... I hope. Meantime, the best place to find them is Ebay.***

***The books, in reading order are:  
SAGA OF OLD CITY***

ARTIFACT OF EVIL  
CITY OF HAWKS  
NIGHT ARRANT  
SEA OF DEATH  
DANCE OF DEMONS  
COME ENDLESS DARKNESS

---

Not a question but a comment. I read this series and absolutely loved it. OK, to be honest I had a hard time trudging my way through Saga of Old city since it was essentially a collection of short stories, but after that - WOW!

I had a friend who read the series all the way up until Come Endless Darkness. He could never find it and didn't believe me that the book was ever printed at all. Anyway Gary, I just wanted to say thanks for the hours upon hours of fond memories I have of that series.

---

MerricB

Thursday, 9th January, 2003, 03:47 AM

*Come Endless Darkness* does indeed exist. Certain copies of it even reached Australia. I know this because I purchased it along with *Dance with Demons...* and gave them both to a friend for a birthday present.

It was only (much) later that I started collecting them for myself; neither *Come Endless Darkness* nor *City of Hawks* is in my possession, though one of my roleplaying friends picked up *City of Hawks* in a second hand bookshop only a month ago.

Gary, with regard to Carcassonne, it seems to be a good game, although there are a few flaws with it. I'll give you more feedback when I've played it some more. It is not in the same league as *Settlers of Catan*, however.

Apparently the Hunters and Gatherers version of Carcassonne fixes many of the flaws of the original game... but loses the flavour of the cities and cloisters. D'oh!

I've also picked up Reiner Knizia's *Kingdoms*, published by Fantasy Flight Games. Only a couple of games of it so far, and again, it isn't a "great" game, but it is one that I personally like quite a bit. More of a light-hearted diversion, I guess. :)

Cheers!

---

Darrin Drader

Thursday, 9th January, 2003, 04:13 AM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by MerricB*

***Come Endless Darkness does indeed exist. Certain copies of it even reached Australia. I know this because I purchased it along with Dance with Demons... and gave them both to a friend for a birthday present.***

---

I wasn't clear in my post. I read all of them including *Come Endless Darkness*. It was my friend that couldn't find it.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 9th January, 2003, 04:35 PM

Short story collections sell only about two-thirds the quantity of full-length novels of the same size. Sadly, I had the most fun--and challenge--writing the yarns found in *NIGHT ARRANT*. It did quite well, but was indeed the book that sold the fewest copies of the series.

I can't fault readers, though, for I tend to prefer full novels myself, even over a collection of related short stories that are themselves a near-complete tale. Knowing what I do now, I could easily have linked the separate yarns into a novel addinf perhaps 30 pahes or so in the proicess, and likely making readers happier with the result.

Merric, I think *SETTLERS OF CATAN* (original game) is a classic, and we always enjoy playing it. I am interested in *CARCASSONNE* more from the standpoint of fortification and siegecraft than from a game perspective, but if it can provide a fun gaming experience, so much the better. Now to find the time to hunt down a copy, read the rules, and get people to play...

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Flexor the Mighty!

Thursday, 9th January, 2003, 05:04 PM

Oh high and mighty Grand Dungeon Master please answer my query.

What is your new *Worldbuilder* book about? A lot of poeple on rpg.net are ripping it apart. Big surprise there huh? :rolleyes: ANYway that was the first I've heard of it and wanted to ask you a few questions before I have the local shop order me one.

Anyway what kind of book is it and what exactly will it help me do? Is it just lists and stuff, table of terms and descriptions to be used to flesh out a game? Or is it something more? Is it out yet?

P.S. \*shamelss suckup follows\* *The Slayers Guide to Dragons* is great.

---

Steverooo

Thursday, 9th January, 2003, 05:49 PM

&nbsp;

---

thatdarncat

Thursday, 9th January, 2003, 06:18 PM

Hey, this is still around? Dang, I should stick my head in general discussion more often :)

---

Sniktch

Thursday, 9th January, 2003, 06:34 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by thatdarncat*

**Hey, this is still around? Dang, I should stick my head in general discussion more often :)**

---

Yeah, but I had to go down to page 15 the other day to dig it up. I wasn't going to let it die out so easily :D

---

Upper\_Krust

Thursday, 9th January, 2003, 07:13 PM

Re: Gord the Rogue

Hi Steverooo! :)

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Steverooo*

**I read *Sea of Death* last, and probably liked it the best. After that, I re-read all the others in "as it happened" order, as much as possible (some jarring discordances, there, such as whether Gord left the old woman to rot, or tenderly buried her, for instance).**

**I thought that I must not have ever read the last book, as I could never remember how it ended. When I re-read it, though, I found out why I had forgotten it... Not a particularly satisfying ending. It seemed very anticlimactic, to me.**

**Ultimately, the ending was highly forgettable. I wonder how you would have handled it if things had worked out with T&R, Gary?**

**Ah well...**

---

I still can't decide which novel (of the series) I liked the best...I loved them all! :D

However I have to challenge your comment about the 'weak finish'; personally I thought there were a number of fantastic swerves in the last book. I don't want to spoil anything for those yet to read the series by revealing them, but what you think is going to happen is turned on its head more than once while still all making sense.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 9th January, 2003, 07:15 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Flexor the Mighty!*

**Oh high and mighty Grand Dungeon Master please answer my query.**

**What is your new Worldbuilder book about? A lot of people on rpg.net are ripping it apart. Big surprise there huh? :rolleyes: Anyway that was the first I've heard of it and wanted to ask you a few questions before I have the local shop order me one.**

**Anyway what kind of book is it and what exactly will it help me do? Is it just lists and stuff, table of terms and descriptions to be used to flesh out a game? Or is it something more? Is it out yet?**

**P.S. \*shamelss suckup follows\* The Slayers Guide to Dragons is great.**

---

The WB is mainly a collection of lists and tables of things one needs to detail and complete a story, adventure location, or a whole campaign world. Along with some little-known facts and many details about herbs and gem minerals, the work provides the user with a single-source book for adding color and fleshing out information and detail. It is a "descriptive" as my co-author Dan Cross has used in describing it. If you do much adventure material for any reason, it is a very useful book that will save you time and make the material you produce easier to put together and more elaborate.

Aside from that, the WB isn't a world builder per se. the whole series is for doing that, as will be seen when Alan Kellogg's NATION BUILDER is released--not soon as Alan is working on the ms. for it now, and my FANTASY LIFE (the socio-economic classes in the fantasy world--a who, what, where, when, why sort of work that treats the nobles and their relation to the clergy to a considerable extent) and Jon Creffield's ESSENTIAL PLACES are ahead of his book in the series. There's a really great book of names by Malcolm Bowers coming too--one that I want very much to have on hand. Naming places and people and monsters is such a tedious chore! Following those there will be a book on seas and adventures there, one on devising adventures, and likely one or two others to round things out. Being overall editor is part of what keeps me very busy of late.

As for the lauds for the SgTD, thanks much, and give the major credit to Jon Creffield, my co-author, and an excellent one for sure :)

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Thursday, 9th January, 2003, 07:24 PM

Re: Gord the Rogue

Quote:

---

Originally posted by Upper\_Krust  
Hi Steverooo! :)

*I still can't decide which novel (of the series) I liked the best...I loved them all! :D*

*However I have to challenge your comment about the 'weak finish'; personally I thought there were a number of fantastic swerves in the last book. I don't want to spoil anything for those yet to read the series by revealing them, but what you think is going to happen is turned on its head more than once while still all making sense.*

hiring in here, I just want to say thanks for those very kind words about the series. I wrote it as fantasy that reflected the AD&D game in feel and scope of action. I suppose it's obvious I like action in my stories and games too :eek:

Anyway, it is great to read that you enjoyed the plot twists. Some of them sort of wrote themselves, as the characters took over and began to direct things outside the planned story outline I had scripted for them. Funny thing about that is it really happens.

Cheers,  
Gary

---

## Hadit

Friday, 10th January, 2003, 04:26 AM

Hello Gary!  
Hope your holidays were joyous!  
Have a question for you concerning ancient Egypt (from another thread that tweaked my interest): How was the court of the Pharaoh arranged? I assume that it could be considered a theocracy... but what were the titles held by subordinates and did they have actual control over fiefdoms around the Nile valley or further? Or was the Pharaoh strictly top dog?  
I ask this of you because I assumed that much study went into the writing of Necropolis, and I thought you may have run across information pertaining to this.  
Thank you dear sir!  
Duglas K  
(Oh... I just thought of one more question that got missed earlier... was the Elder Elemental Eye worshipped by Eclavdra and her minions an avatar of Tharizdun?)

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## Q&A with Gary Gygax - Part I

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Page 35 of 36   First   ...   25   26   27   28   29   30   31   32   33   34   36   36   Last

Upper\_Krust

Friday, 10th January, 2003, 04:42 PM

Re: Gord the Rogue

Hi Gary! :)

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**hiring in here, I just want to say thanks for those very kind words about the series.**

Just telling it like it is big guy...now get whoevers concerned to pull their finger out and get those graphic novel interpretations released. :p

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**I wrote it as fantasy that reflected the AD&D game in feel and scope of action. I suppose it's obvious I like action in my stories and games too :eek:**

The series kind of paralleled our own AD&D game at the time...lets just say we also took things a bit beyond 20th-level and leave it at that. :)

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

**Anyway, it is great to read that you enjoyed the plot twists. SOme of them sort of wrote themselves, as the characters took over and began to direct things outside the planned story outline I had scripted for them. Funny thing about that is it really happens.**

Graz'zts big mistake is an all time favourite and is accompanied by one of my favourite lines:

"IT IS A DAY TO SLAY OR BE SLAIN!"

Love him or hate him, old six-digits is quite a character. :D

Upper\_Krust

Friday, 10th January, 2003, 04:46 PM

Hi Hadit! :)

Quote:

*Originally posted by Hadit*

**(Oh... I just thought of one more question that got missed earlier... was the Elder Elemnetal Eye worshipped by Eclavdra and her minions an avatar of Tharizdun?)**

I imagine Gary will be along at some point but until then you can find out more about Tharizdun here:

<http://www.greyhawk-codex.com/codex/...tharizdunq.htm>

<http://members.bellatlantic.net/~vze33gpz/gordmain.html>

<http://home.att.net/~david.r.ross/Ni...tharizdun.html>

Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 10th January, 2003, 05:02 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Hadit*

**Hello Gary!**

**Hope your holidays were joyous!**

Howdy, and thanks. We had a great holiday with most of the family in for Christmas.

Quote:

**Have a question for you concerning ancient Egypt (from another thread that tweaked my interest): How was the court of the Pharoah arranged? I assume that it could be considered a theocracy... but what were the titles held by subordinates and did they have actual control over fiefdoms around the Nile valley or further? Or was the Pharoah strictly top dog?**

**I ask this of you because I assumed that much study went into the writing of Necropolis, and I thought you may have run across**

*information pertaining to this.*

---

Pharoah was absolute ruler, a living god. The various districts of Egypt were ruled by governors, but they were generally absolutely under the thumb of the king. The military was absolutely loyal too.

I do not have an organizational chart of the government under the pharaoh--the palace officials, priests, governors, overseers, and scribes. In all my reading I never came across anything resembling a treatment of this. Sorry.

Thank you dear sir!

Duglas K[B]/[QUOTE]

Quote:

---

*(Oh... I just thought of one more question that got missed earlier... was the Elder Elemental Eye worshipped by Eclavdra and her minions an avatar of Tharizdun?)*

---

No, the Elder Elemental God I envisaged as an entity of vaguely Chronos-like sort, a deity of great power but of chaotic sort, and not always highly clever in thought and action. Big T on the other hand is the epitome of pure, reasoning and scheming evil.

Eclavdra, being more of the mold of Tharizdun, would prefer to have as "master" a powerful deity she might hope to influence, thus the EEG.

Cheers,

Gary

---

Son\_of\_Thunder

Wednesday, 15th January, 2003, 12:46 AM

Just a few questions

Howdy Gary,

A few questions if you please. I haven't been able to find out if there are other races besides humans in your *Legendary Adventures* game. Are there? And secondly, what do you think of the recently published 'Book of Vile Darkness'? Do you think it needed to be made?

Thanks for your time.

Son of Thunder

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 15th January, 2003, 01:49 PM

Re: Just a few questions

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Son\_of\_Thunder*  
**Howdy Gary,**

***A few questions if you please. I haven't been able to find out if there are other races besides humans in your *Legendary Adventures* game. Are there? And secondly, what do you think of the recently published 'Book of Vile Darkness'? Do you think it needed to be made?***

***Thanks for your time.***

***Son of Thunder***

---

Hi:)

There are a lot of Avatar races to play in the LA game, none of which are exactly parallel to other systems', 3E included.

Dwarfs--about like standard RPG ones, with a few differences.

Gnomes--ditto.

Elfs--a sort of rustic elf race.

Kobolds--the most potent non-human race for sure.

Oafs--large and strong, none-too-bright humanoids

Oafs, major--ditto.

Orcs, greater--more human-like, semi-neanderthal types.

Orcs--ditto.

Orcs, lesser--ditto.

Trollkin--annoying and shifty little anti-dwarfs, perhaps...

Veshoges--the Ferengi of the system.

Wylfs, grotto--wild, subterranean elf types.

Wylfs, thicker--ditto, only woodsy sorts.

Plenty of different race roles to play, and some great roleplay opportunities in the mix:)

Thankfully what I feared with the publication of the BOOK OF VILE DARKNESS has not happened. The opponents of D&D and RPGs in general did not jump on it and make it into a weapon in their arsenal. Thus my reservations have been allayed.

It seems more of a "hype" product than anything else, but that's not much of a knock. If it is selling well, then it is a work that the consumers wanted, if for nothing else the rebellious "shock" value.

Given WotC's continual assertion that the 3E game is about heroes adventuring against Evil, one might question its addition to the line, of course. From my perspective, though, one must have dark villains to oppose the bright heroes, so for those who are in need of assistance in developing the malign and evil to be fought against, the BOOK OF VILE DARKNESS should be of use.

Cheers,  
Gary

---

dcollins

Wednesday, 15th January, 2003, 04:07 PM

Re: Re: Sea of Death

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*  
**The books, in reading order are...**  
**DANCE OF DEMONS**  
**COME ENDLESS DARKNESS**

---

One minor observation:

*Come Endless Darkness* actually comes before *Dance of Demons*.

---

ColonelHardisson

Wednesday, 15th January, 2003, 05:09 PM

Gary, what mythology is Demogorgon from? I know I've seen him somewhere, but I can't recall where.

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 15th January, 2003, 06:03 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by ColonelHardisson*  
**Gary, what mythology is Demogorgon from? I know I've seen him somewhere, but I can't recall where.**

---

It was the Greeks, in their mythology, who had Demogorgon originally. He was held as the elemental force of earth that which made plants grow, and was thus depicted as an old man covered with moss. Medieval writers demonized him into a terrible ruler of the underworld--a much more colorful depiction for use in a FRPG :eek:

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Paul\_Klein

Wednesday, 15th January, 2003, 07:04 PM

Gary, I have another question for ya:

What does your "average" work-day look like? Do you typically write for 8 hours? How many projects do you typically work on at the same time? Do you ever get burned out doing so much writing? ;)

Thanks!

---

Col\_Pladoh

Wednesday, 15th January, 2003, 08:45 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Paul\_Klein*  
**Gary, I have another question for ya:**

**What does your "average" work-day look like? Do you typically write for 8 hours? How many projects do you typically work on at the same time? Do you ever get burned out doing so much writing? ;)**

**Thanks!**

---

I get to the computer sometime between 6 and 7 AM on an average day, stay here most of the time thereafter until 6 or 7 PM, seven days per except during football season and in fine summer weather.

Email and board postings take up anywhere from an hour to three a day. When I am on a hot creative project I keep it to an hour, then grudgingly given.

I work on two or three projects at a time, usually, although one will be center stage, the others in the wings--given only slight attention while the main one is being completed in rough draft.

Indeed, I get burnout. Usually a migraine headache will be the result. That means I am forced to take a day or two off, sleep, rest, watch the tube. Sadly I can't read much when a migraine headache is hanging in.

In summer when I feel a lack of enthusiasm for creative work, no ideas are hammering at my brain seeking to be let out, I sit on the front porch, listen to the birds, read books of fact or fiction, or in the evening watch the fireflies and listen to the crickets, sipping minted and lemoned iced tea or maybe enjoy a gin and tonic. That usually gets me back on track in a day or three.

Actually playing a different sort of game, RPG or boardgame, will often spur me to want to be creative, if outside of the realms of fantasy. No matter, as the energy can then be channeled.

If things are really slow in the creative thinking department, then it's time for a holiday. Speaking of which, I could use one somewhere warm, sunny, and flower-fused :D

Cheers,  
Gary

---

## Flexor the Mighty!

Friday, 24th January, 2003, 09:53 PM

Hey there Gary I've got a question for you.

What parts of 1e did you house rule when you still played it? I read in an old issue of Dragon that you used a different hand to hand combat system. Was it the same one that was published in Dragon? Any other changes?

---

## Col\_Pladoh

Friday, 24th January, 2003, 10:40 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Flexor the Mighty!*  
**Hey there Gary I've got a question for you.**

---

**What parts of 1e did you house rule when you still played it? I read in an old issue of Dragon that you used a different hand to hand combat system. Was it the same one that was published in Dragon? Any other changes?**

---

Whoa, and I have to think hard about those questions. Generally, I just DMed on the fly, so to speak, and didn't use the rules books except for random encounters, monster stats, and treasure.

when hand-to-hand fighting occurred I usually did that seat-of-the-pants rules--asking what the character was doing and deciding on the chance for success based on the circumstances.

I did not use psionics, generally ignored weapons vs. armor type and weapon speed.

When an opponent was helpless I always allowed an immediate kill if of lower level; otherwise a successful hit killed, a "miss" doing double damage anyway.

That's about all I can think of ;)

Cheers,  
Gary

---

## BigFreekinGoblinoid

Friday, 24th January, 2003, 10:44 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Paul\_Klein*  
**Gary, I have another question for ya:**

---

**What does your "average" work-day look like? Do you typically write for 8 hours? How many projects do you typically work on at the same time? Do you ever get burned out doing so much writing? ;)**

---

**Thanks!**

---

Here is Gary's morning routine:

<http://www.homestarrunner.com/sbemail54.html>

:D :D :D :D :D Cheers Gary!

---

## Col\_Pladoh

Saturday, 25th January, 2003, 03:03 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by BigFreekinGoblinoid*

---

**Here is Gary's morning routine:**

<http://www.homestarrunner.com/sbemail54.html>

---

**:D :D :D :D :D Cheers Gary!**

---

That was a very odd cartoon...

The popcorn bag looks like something my wife would have on her hand. I don't care much for the stuff unless it's carmelized and has peanuts added;)

And there was no mug of coffee and a Camel smoking in the ashtray :p

Heh,  
Gary



BronzeDragon

Saturday, 25th January, 2003, 09:33 PM

Well, this has probably been asked before, but the prospect of wading through almost 700 posts to find the answer is, shall I say, not very entertaining...

What product do you rank as your WORST?

I always hear people ask to writers what they think is their best product, and it starts to get old pretty fast. I always wanted to know which piece the authors really wanted to be able to erase their names from.

Let me establish only one condition for the answer : the product must have been printed.

Thanks in advance...

Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 26th January, 2003, 06:36 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by BronzeDragon*

**Well, this has probably been asked before, but the prospect of wading through almost 700 posts to find the answer is, shall I say, not very entertaining...**

**What product do you rank as your WORST?**

**[snip]**

**Thanks in advance...**

To be asked this is uique, actually. I would rank my "The Gnome Cache" story--thankfully never completed in DRAGON Magazine--as one that needed to be re-written.

Much flak has been generated about CYBORG COMMANDO, and I write very little of it, but the portion that was published needed reworking and more play-testing, plus the addition of the two other parts of the whole game.

Otherwise, I am generally happy with my published work, as is proper for an author. If one doesn't like something, it should not be sent to a publisher :rolleyes:

Cheers,  
Gary

MerricB

Sunday, 26th January, 2003, 08:00 PM

...or it shows how desperate you were at the time, Gary?

(Flicks through Tomb of Horrors... "Call that a trap? Huh! If it can't even kill Robilar, it's not worth putting in..." ;))

Gary, is there a type of product you enjoy writing the most? (Novel, adventure, rules supplement, core rulebook, book of advice, etc.)

And going back to one of those dark memories from oAD&D, might I trouble you about the assassin?

It's one of those things that I've always seen debate on amongst 1E people: does the assassination ability work against any old monster/opponent the assassin happens to surprise in a dungeon or elsewhere, or is it only usable against the poor innocent soul that the assassin has been hired to kill?

Or is it somewhere in between? Something that requires planning, or something that can be done on the spur of the moment?

Cheers!

Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 26th January, 2003, 10:09 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by MerricB*

**...or it shows how desperate you were at the time, Gary?**

Desperate? No, just very much immersed in writing the Gord the Rogue novels. New Infinities needed the sales income from them, of course, and they sold very well, so I was constrained in what I created.

Quote:

**(Flicks through Tomb of Horrors... "Call that a trap? Huh! If it can't even kill Robilar, it's not worth putting in..." ;))**

**Gary, is there a type of product you enjoy writing the most? (Novel, adventure, rules supplement, core rulebook, book of advice, etc.)**

Noppers! More of a mood and inspiration thing...although modules are not usually on top of my favorite s list, because designing a new and entertaining one is very demanding. The last one I did, HALL OF MANY PANES, took about six months to complete.

Quote:

---

***And going back to one of those dark memories from oAD&D, might I trouble you about the assassin?***

***It's one of those things that I've always seen debate on amongst 1E people: does the assassination ability work against any old monster/opponent the assassin happens to surprise in a dungeon or elsewhere, or is it only usable against the poor innocent soul that the assassin has been hired to kill?***

***Or is it somewhere in between? Something that requires planning, or something that can be done on the spur of the moment?***

***Cheers!***

---

As you suggest in closing, the assassin character was meant to have some limitation, the need for planning the kill. Of course, a totally unexpected victim seen and assessed needs little in the way of thought and preparation...

Cheers, Merric,  
Gary

---

MerricB

Sunday, 26th January, 2003, 10:37 PM

Quote:

---

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***Desperate? No, just very much immersed in writing the Gord the Rogue novels. New Infinities needed the sales income from them, of course, and they sold very well, so I was constrained in what I created.***

---

What a pity. Having to create material that sold well. :)

I've always greatly valued the Gord books as an insight as to the types of adventures that entertain you, Gary - there's also a certain inspiration from reading a novel that I don't get from reading a module, and I'm very glad that the Gord books were written.

Cheers!

---

Mark

Sunday, 26th January, 2003, 10:41 PM

Any favorite in the Super Bowl, Poppa G? :)

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▼ Page 35 of 36   ◀◀ First   ◀ ...   25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 36 36 ▶   Last ▶▶

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Col\_Pladoh

Sunday, 26th January, 2003, 10:48 PM

Merric,

I had the most fun writing the short stories in NIGHT ARRANT--as the punning name likely demonstrates. It sold the least, as collections of short stories are want.

Now time to bail from the computer, open a Sam Adams ale, and watch the Superbowl. I am likely to root for the Bucs, but the team that plays best winning will be fine as far as I'm concerned.

Ciao,  
Gary

---

Mark

Sunday, 26th January, 2003, 10:55 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh****Now time to bail from the computer, open a Sam Adams ale, and watch the Superbowl. I am likely to root for the Bucs, but the team that plays best winning will be fine as far as I'm concerned.***

---

When gaming becomes more chic, perhaps you'll be able to parlay that affinity for Sammy's into a commercial endorsement... :)

Go Bucs!

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Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 27th January, 2003, 12:32 PM

Samuel Adams Brewery has restored the reputé of American beer, and thankfully there are now lots of mincr-breweries also purveying something better than the tasteless near-water that passes for beer in the eyes of most folks here.

I am concerned about Sam Adams making a light beer, though. Ugh!

The Bucs spanked the Raiders, didn't they...

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Mark

Monday, 27th January, 2003, 02:31 PM

Quote:

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*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh****Samuel Adams Brewery has restored the reputé of American beer, and thankfully there are now lots of mincr-breweries also purveying something better than the tasteless near-water that passes for beer in the eyes of most folks here.******I am concerned about Sam Adams making a light beer, though. Ugh!******The Bucs spanked the Raiders, didn't they...***

---

No doubt, on all counts.

While we're on the subject, and before someone else steps up with a gaming related question, what passes for Super Bowl fare in the G-hold? Is it a major buffet deal with each person refilling their plates from a variety of dishes or is the cuisine themed, perhaps, to reflect the occasion and spread all at once on the grand table? Would a guest be resigned to chips, dips and finger foods? Just curious... :)

\*edit\* Oh, and I suppose we can bring it back round to gaming by asking if you ever do anything special food-wise for game nights? :) \*end edit\*

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Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 27th January, 2003, 03:27 PM

Hi Mark,

Heh, and a major event for the airing of the Superbowl is likely only if the Bears are playing--although my buddies who are Packer fans might force me to host a "special" for that event is Green Bay is in the game. As it looks now, there'll be no big Superbowl parties here for some time to come...

Typically only some popcorn get's made for gaming night here on Thursday, as the team brings a host of their own drinks and snacks along. However, if I have been cooking I offer samples to the players. Last time I did that was when I made a delightful (if I do say so myself) fresh

mushroom soup with sherry and sour cream. Before that it was some very spicy chili--bound to bring out the Tums at bedtime :eek:

Anyway, we wanted to have a holidays party but it got postponed, and maybe we'll host a small shindig for the group around Valentines Day, the wife informs me. I am urging 1 April as the most appropriate date.

Cheers,  
Gary

---

mystraschos

Monday, 27th January, 2003, 06:16 PM

Ahh the immortal Gary Gygax has just made the depth of my worship for him deepen with his bears remark. I live in the sw burbs of chicago and I am a chi town fan through and through, even to the point of loving the cubs and hating the sox.

Just knowing that you are also a bears fan gives me a great feeling of well being.....if the great Gary Gygax roots for the monsters of the midway then surely the universe has a sense of justice.

I will not bother you with the tons of questions I have for you, as to tell the truth I really don't know where to start. So lets just pretend I asked them all and you answered as I thought you would answer.

One last thing.....I would very much like to thank you for your gift of dnd, it has been of innumerable import to my life and has brought me alot of happiness and great friends. I salute you sir!

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 27th January, 2003, 06:59 PM

Mystras' Chosen,

Not a few Bears fans think I am daft because I don't hate the Packers...

As for your kind words of thanks, I appreciate them a lot. Gaming is a really great hobby, and as you point out it provides more than just short-term entertainment. I feel very privileged in being given the ability to create the material I have, and that so many others have enjoyed it, had fun as I have;)

Cheers,  
Gary

---

mythusmage

Monday, 27th January, 2003, 08:51 PM

You Aint Seen Nuthin' Yet

Wait till the full *Gygax Fantasy Worlds* line is out. If you thought the charts, lists, and tables at the back of the first edition DMG were comprehensive...

The next time somebody asks what trees grow on that boreal ridge line, or need advice on the important things a kingdom needs, you'll have the advice at your finger tips.

A thought just occurred to me. How many people here would be interested in a DVD compilation of the GFW line, once the books are out?

Formatting in HTML so you could view it in your favorite browser, with a printing option for those pages you might need at your game.

And a note for the Col:

Expect the manuscript March 1st. Lots of gaming goodness in the popular Mythusmage style.:)

---

MerricB

Monday, 27th January, 2003, 09:15 PM

Re: You Aint Seen Nuthin' Yet

Quote:

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*Originally posted by mythusmage*

***Wait till the full Gygax Fantasy Worlds line is out. If you thought the charts, lists, and tables at the back of the first edition DMG were comprehensive...***

***The next time somebody asks what trees grow on that boreal ridge line, or need advice on the important things a kingdom needs, you'll have the advice at your finger tips.***

***A thought just occurred to me. How many people here would be interested in a DVD compilation of the GFW line, once the books are out?***

---

I'd be very interested in a *CD-ROM* compilation. I very much doubt there's enough material there for a DVD, and most people still don't have DVD players in their computers.

Cheers!

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 27th January, 2003, 09:28 PM

Re: You Aint Seen Nuthin' Yet

Quote:

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*Originally posted by mythusmage*

...

***And a note for the Col:***

*Expect the manuscript March 1st. Lots of gaming goodness in the popular Mythusmage style.:)*

---

Have you received a copy of the final ms. for LIVING FANTASY from the Trolls? There's likely material therein that you'll want to refer to for your project, Alan ;)

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Monday, 27th January, 2003, 09:31 PM

Re: Re: You Aint Seen Nuthin' Yet

Quote:

*Originally posted by MerricB*

***I'd be very interested in a CD-ROM compilation. I very much doubt there's enough material there for a DVD, and most people still don't have DVD players in their computers.***

***Cheers!***

Merric, I've flagged TLG about this. When the line is complete there will be over seven volumes in it, so a DVD might be in order.

Cheers,  
Gary

---

mythusmage

Tuesday, 28th January, 2003, 02:25 AM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Col\_Pladoh*

***Have you received a copy of the final ms. for LIVING FANTASY from the Trolls? There's likely material therein that you'll want to refer to for your project, Alan ;)***

***Cheers,  
Gary***

I haven't even gotten the FM for the WB from the Trolls. Feel free to pass on the following info to the goofs.

Alan Kellogg's Very Own Snailmail Address!

Alan Kellogg  
333 G St Apt 607  
San Diego CA 92101

As to the compilation...

After thinking about it, I suspect an HTML version would fit on two or three CDs. PDF would require a DVD, thanks to the extra coding required. Either way would be useful for those folks who need but a few pages from the books at that night's game.

And a little factoid for the good folks reading this thread:

Consider roads. The state of a nation's roads can tell you a lot about the country itself. The late Zairian dictator Mobuto Sese Seko deliberately kept the roads of his country in very poor condition, in the belief that well maintain roads would allow his enemies to better organize against him. Once he died there was no way any possible successor could extend his control over the now re-named Democratic Republic of the Congo, with the result that the DRC is a diplomatic fiction.

The old Soviet Union wasn't quite as bad, but roads were kept primitive the better to stymie any anti-government coup. With the result that even today Russia is having to spend billions of rubles on upgrading her roads and rail.

A nation with healthy trade will tend to have good roads. Well designed, well maintained, with lots of traffic. (Which raises its own problems:)) If the party comes from a country with bad roads and they find themselves in one with good roads, emphasis the difference. Stone instead of dirt. Good drainage instead of long stretches of mud. Smooth, easy travel instead of tedious plodding. Actually making their destination ahead of time, and without getting hassled by brigands and bandits instead of an endeavour involving delays, bandit attacks, and stray critters of the baneful sort.

Well kept roads also mean a wealthy nation. A prosperous, populous nation with lots of opportunity for trade and adventure.

Adventure? The more trade a nation engages in, the more opportunity for theft and brigandage. The more prosperous a nation is, the larger its population grows. The larger the population grows, the more land it needs, both for housing and to support itself. The more land it needs, the more human habitation spreads out into the wilderness. In the real world we have black bears wandering into American suburbs, in your fantasy setting they might be basilisks instead.

And how does the party get to where the basilisks are scarfing down on lap dogs and house cats? By taking the roads.

---

Darrin Drader

Tuesday, 28th January, 2003, 02:40 AM

Wow, I can't believe this thread is still alive and kicking (and please don't take that as any kind of a tie-in with the GG is dead hoax). Gary, you rock!

BTW, I recently bought and printed a copy of the Temple of Elemental Evil. I had it a few years ago but had to hawk it when I needed some cash. Love your stuff. Keep it coming!

---

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 28th January, 2003, 12:57 PM

Alan Kellogg's Tour de Force ;)

Mythusmage,

An excellent bit of commentary there in all seriousness. I've flagged Steve. I'd send you unedited MS doc files of my mss., but they won't work on your computer. Besides you'd then begin editing them :rolleyes:

Cheers,  
Gary

---

Col\_Pladoh

Tuesday, 28th January, 2003, 01:01 PM

Quote:

*Originally posted by Baraendur*

***Wow, I can't believe this thread is still alive and kicking (and please don't take that as any kind of a tie-in with the GG is dead hoax). Gary, you rock!***

***BTW, I recently bought and printed a copy of the Temple of Elemental Evil. I had it a few years ago but had to hawk it when I needed some cash. Love your stuff. Keep it coming!***

Thanks Darrin:)

The ToEE was a fun adventure to DM...I never did get to play it, of course. If you happen upon THE HERMIT, give it a read, and I suspect you'll find it to your liking. It isn't as long as ToEE, but it has all sorts of different challenges for the party undertaking the mission, different play environments too.

Cheers,  
Gary

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Dinkeldog

Tuesday, 28th January, 2003, 02:19 PM

Please continue this [here](#).

Show 20 post(s) from this thread on one page

▼ Page 36 of 36   ◀◀ First   ◀ ...   26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36

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